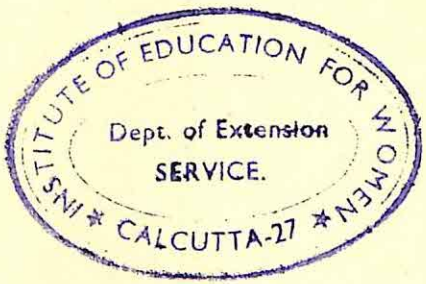
THE ADAPTABLE SCHOOL


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THE ADAPTABLE SCHOOL



THE ADAPTABLE SCHOOL

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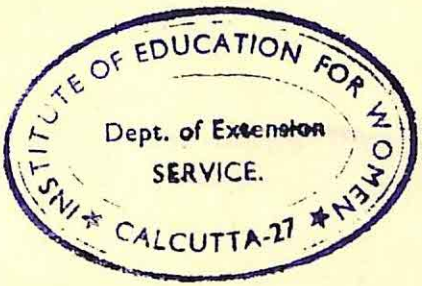
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This book is dedicated to

PAUL R. MORT

whose clear thinking, inventiveness, and ability to stimulate others with the adaptability concept has generated a movement in the improvement of public-school education that marks a new milestone in educational progress.



Foreword

During the last decade and a half there have been some four-score studies of the tempo of change in American schools and of the factors influencing that tempo. Each of these studies was pointed at some particular facet of the problem of interest at the time. Taken all together, however, they provide new handles for attacking the task of operating schools for practitioners in all areas of school administration. It is a considerable job to go through all these materials and integrate them around each pattern of administrative activity. In performing this task for the elementary-school principal in a large city, Dr. Kumpf has made a very real contribution and has pioneered a line of development which we may hope will be extended to cover other aspects of school administration.

PAUL R. MORT
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION
TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

May, 1952

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THE ADAPTABLE SCHOOL

1 Introduction

Educators today are faced with a challenge to their educational procedures which transcends that of any previous period in educational history. Never before has so much been known of the learning process and of ways and means of conducting our schools to realize optimum results. The key to progress is supplied by the application of the criterion of adaptability which is used to evaluate educational practices and to point the way in the improvement of education.

In the past, educators were satisfied to improve the schools by locating good schools, investigating the educational patterns used in such schools, then taking steps to transplant these patterns to other less modern schools. This procedure has had a good effect upon education but has caused the progress realized to be slow and halting. Eventually these transplanted practices became out of date, yet they were still slavishly followed in many schools.

It became apparent that, for more lasting progress, educators must reach deeper into the question of why some schools

and school systems were always in the forefront of educational modernization and progress, while others lagged behind. Isolating and transferring good practices are not sufficient to insure adequate and continuous progress. What is needed is the examination of good schools to ascertain *why* they are ready to readjust their educational programs to meet newly emerging needs.

This volume, then, is not merely an exposition of good current practices in education which schools everywhere would probably do well to use, but concerns itself with the *conditions* which cause a school to continually search out improvement and, where practices are not yet known that will result in this improvement, to stimulate the invention of such practices: not just *what* good practices are in use but *why* a school or school system was impelled to recognize a need and then evolve a practice to meet this need. This latter predisposition and process is referred to by Mort[1] as adaptability. More simply stated, adaptability means the discarding of outworn practices and the adoption and invention of newer practices to meet newly emerging needs.

Only adaptability can serve as the test of modern education in a world in which the only thing of which we can be certain is change. A prime cause of stagnation and sluggish adjustment of educational practices in the past has been the static nature of the criteria by which the adequacy of these practices was judged. Now, through the application of the criterion of adaptability, a dynamic instrument is available that places no limitations on progress.

Within the decade adaptability has appeared on the educational scene and has attracted the attention and energy of

[1] Mort, Paul R., and Cornell, Francis G., *Adaptability of Public School Systems.* New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1938.

an ever-increasing number of educators. In the pioneer study of adaptability by Mort and Cornell [2] a beginning was made in the study of the adaption pattern that has since been augmented by other studies[3] in this field.

These studies now point to the need for changes in the operational patterns of our schools, particularly in the large city school systems (see Chapter III), which will take into account the patterns of adaptability already analyzed and will establish a path by which future patterns might easily find their way into the operational procedures of the school. Too little consideration has thus far been given by the individual school principal, among others, to the part played by him in assuring a better educational program for his school.

In the face of knowledge and understanding of the process of change, some of our institutions are inexcusably slow to adjust to new conditions and to newly emerging needs. It is regrettable that, in general, our educational institutions must be numbered among the laggards despite the efforts of many educators with searching vision and with a clear comprehension of the tremendous job that needs to be done by the schools. The great lag found by Mort and Cornell [4] must not continue to shackle the kind of service each school could give its pupils. Traditional procedures have indicated the inability of educators to keep our schools from using patterns which were known at the turn of the century and which are still used despite research which proves the inadequacy and undesirability of some of them.

Led by the studies of Mort and Cornell, there is a growing amount of research to indicate that: 1. schools are snail-like in

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] See bibliography, Group A.

[4] Mort, Paul R., and Cornell, Francis G., *American Schools in Transition*, pp. 408–9. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1941.

adapting to new conditions and new needs, and, 2. there are definite ways and means of developing an adaptable school or school system if educators can be made aware of the need for better schools and will then consciously embark on a program designed to incorporate the features of such adapting procedures into their own school programs.

If we wish schools that meet the needs, wishes, interests, and aptitudes of children and society while fostering desirable home membership, providing good health practices, considering civic problems and responsibilities, encouraging wholesome recreation, and stimulating creative activities, we must initiate a program that will maintain its strength and vitality in the face of the changes perceptible on all sides of us. This can be done only by insuring that schools be adaptable—that is, capable of continued modification to keep pace with the changing needs and concerns of children as brought about by world and local developments.

In their Pennsylvania study Mort and Cornell [5] report that frequently a period of a hundred years elapsed from the time of the first recognition of a need to the relatively complete diffusion of a practice designed to meet this need. Of this period approximately fifty years were consumed in evolving the practice that eventually was destined for general acceptance as meeting the need first noted a half-century earlier. Another fifty years were required to bring this accepted practice into general use by the schools of the nation. Studies by Bateman[6] and Farnsworth[7] indicate similar findings.

Truly it should not require five generations before a need,

[5] Mort and Cornell, *American Schools in Transition*, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

[6] Bateman, Edward A., *Development of the County-Unit School District in Utah*. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1940.

[7] Farnsworth, Philo T., *Adaptation Process in Public School Systems*. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1940.

strong enough to impinge on the thinking of educators, is met by a generally diffused educational practice. Consider the hundreds of thousands of children who must pass through our schools without the benefit of procedures of known value.

The large cities contain many factors favorable to adaptability, such as a broad tax base, relatively high expenditures per pupil, well-trained administrative and teaching staffs, adequate business management, and a more complex and stimulating social life. Yet despite these advantages many cities are falling behind the leading edge in maintaining adaptable schools. Smaller communities, those under 100,000 in population, have taken over the role of leadership. There is now a definite need for a plan which could be followed by the principal of an elementary school in a large city school system with reasonable assurance of its resulting in a marked improvement in adaptability for his school. To make more specific and to clarify some of the principles of adaptability considered in later chapters, reference will be made, from time to time, to the application of these principles to a selected elementary school in a large city school system.

What would be the characteristics of an elementary school if an attempt were made to put into practice the information we now have regarding ways and means of improving our schools? What is the responsibility of the principal of the school in achieving a high degree of adaptability for his school? What measures are needed to insure that the school would not slip into the easy fault of continuing with improvements on a given level rather than striking out continually to incorporate in its processes additional new findings as they were discovered? What steps can be taken to make of a school a pioneer on the growing edge of educational practices, where experimentation, originality, creativeness, and invention are encouraged?

II Characteristics of an Adaptable School

What are the characteristics of an adaptable school that present such a challenge to the elementary-school principal? To understand more fully the goal toward which it is necessary for a school to move in the achievement of greater adaptability, it may be well to examine some of the known characteristics of adaptable schools.

Research to date[1] indicates the features of a school that will exhibit not only a large number of adjustments to current needs but also a strong tendency to recognize and adequately meet additional needs as they develop. It will be the task of succeeding chapters to clarify how these factors can be utilized in the improvement of an elementary school.

THE PRINCIPAL

It has been found that the principal of an adaptable school requires a rich background of training and should take advanced professional courses in a leading teachers college at

[1] Gleaned from the findings in the references listed in Group A in the bibliography. Implications of these findings for the operation of a particular school are developed in Chapters V through IX.

least every five years. He should also be interested in developing a more adaptable school and recognize his role as that of leader in the adaptive process for his school. He should be alert to the needs of boys and girls and constantly engaged in finding better ways of meeting these needs.

The principal of a school where adjustments to changes are continually made is a student of the conditioners which make a school more adaptable and is actively engaged in shortening the time span between the introduction of an adaptation and its acceptance by three per cent of the schools of the nation. He is aware, through surveys, of the conditioners in his school district which serve to favor and those which retard the adaptability of his school.

The principal utilizes the full leeway for local action provided by the board of education in order to accomplish broad and significant changes in his school. Training and ability as a leader are requisites, for the principal must function as principal educator of the school staff and as community superintendent in the school community. He makes his school the focal point of community life.

The principal develops local initiative by raising the expectancy of all citizens in the community as to what education should accomplish. He frequently gathers together interested citizens to consider unmet needs in the school program so that these laymen will actively support changes designed to meet these needs in the future. He uses many means for making the people in the community increasingly aware of what constitutes a good school and uses the community leaders to further this end by organizing a community council made up of the best informed and most articulate citizens in the community. In short, he adopts as a pattern for his work as school principal that of the superintendent of the small, well-supported community school system. He retains his position

of leadership of staff and community because he is master in his field.

THE STAFF

The staff of an adaptable school has a good understanding of the power of education and realizes that adaptability is one of the essentials for success in the present community. Teachers understand the factors that lessen or enhance adaptability. Competence of the staff is assured through the integration of the abilities and assets of all teachers comprising the staff.

There are on the staff of an adaptable school a few teachers who are creative, who have ideas for change with which they experiment, and who are thus instrumental in bringing new procedures to the school in which they teach. They seek ideas for change from outside sources and get better results in trying them out.

The teachers found in adaptable schools are graduates of a variety of teacher education institutions and have a high level of training. Some of them are trained in two or three areas. Some have received recognition for leadership as undergraduates. Some members of the staff have had training for another profession. They are inclined to add from six to twelve hours of professional training in each five-year period. The staff itself is mature, with an average age of about 40. Individual members of the staff have from ten to thirty years of experience in teaching.

Some 10 per cent or more of the staff are men, and there are not a great many married women teachers. A portion of the staff did not live in the community before teaching there, and a portion now live outside of the school district. They tend to own property.

These teachers have and use their initiative for leadership

in the community. They include the study of public education in the curriculum. They become members of symbiotic groups in the community.

Staff members tend to purchase many professional books and magazines and in general read widely. Many have a library of more than 300 books. They travel a great deal, many of them in excess of 500 miles from home and in foreign countries.

THE SUPERINTENDENT

If the community is located in a large city it has at the head of its school system a superintendent who sees as his chief function the introduction of adaptations. He encourages the individual school principals to function as community leaders in their respective school communities. As such they will raise the level of expectancy on the part of citizens regarding education in the school community. They will develop local initiative in the school district as one of the best ways of insuring an adaptable school and school system.

The superintendent provides for flexibility in the organization of the school system adequate to permit wide experimentation in order to stimulate and uncover a maximum of worthy innovations. He seeks divergences from general practice as a means of encouraging creativeness. He recognizes developments arising in individual schools and avoids inspection as the prime function of the central office staff. He draws on the professional staff and the public in the formulation of policy.

The superintendent draws frequently on university consultants to assist in developing educational philosophy, in uncovering needs, in experimenting with solutions, and in galvanizing the community into action to catch up on proved adaptations. Diffusion of adaptations is largely delegated to

members of the central office staff. The central office staff has as a chief function the support of forward-looking principals by giving them the benefit of specialized knowledge, possessed by members of the central office staff, in the development of adaptability and adaptations in the individual schools.

THE COMMUNITY

An adaptable school tends to be located in a community which is near 100,000 in population, has many people represented in the white-collar or professional occupations, has a high cultural level, has a high percentage of owner-occupied dwellings, and has many inhabitants fifty years of age or older. It tends to be high in per capita wealth, per pupil expenditure for education, and per cent of eighth-grade, high-school, and college graduates. A fairly high median grade has been attained by those in the community who are twenty-five years of age and older. A low percentage of the population is foreign-born, and among the foreign-born no one group greatly outnumbers any of the others.

Good will toward education in the community is related to the educational level of the community, occupational level of the community, and social factors working to broaden the public mind with reference to education. The community has characteristics which condition the expression of good will and understanding toward education. Most important, it has a large majority of citizens who are interested in and concerned about the kind of education offered in their community which leads them to participate in the affairs of the school. It has a high level of understanding of what schools can do, and citizens continue to obtain information as to what constitutes a good school so that they may participate with the principal and staff in producing better schools.

The citizens in the community are sufficiently informed on

educational matters to realize that not all children can reach the same level of achievement, and to appreciate the importance of experimentation in education. Not only are these citizens informed on specific problems of education, but they have an over-all picture of education to serve as a backdrop for interpreting problems and issues of curriculum or child guidance. As a result these citizens are willing to serve on the community council in connection with the school.

Many communities are in turn a part of a larger or broader social setting which might be thought of as a super community. It was found that the more adaptable schools are located in a community which is part of a super community offering many cultural advantages and containing other schools interested and actively engaged in promoting more adaptable schools.

SYMBIOTIC GROUPS

The symbiotic groups in the community are staff-connected with the schools and are interested in the quality of the schools in their area. The school makes special effort to work with groups which have a favorable effect upon the adaptability of the school.

As this investigation concerns elementary schools, particularly those in the large city school systems, it may be well to examine briefly the problems which beset a principal desirous of developing an adaptable school in an environment conducive to unification and systematization.

III The Problem of the Large City School System

As has been pointed out earlier, at the present time communities of approximately 100,000 in population tend to have the most adaptable schools. Special consideration is given in this chapter to the problems of the large city school system because: 1. it affects so many children—about half of all school children in this country are to be found in the schools of urban communities; and, 2. it possesses many factors which favor adaptability, even though the large city school systems have definitely dropped behind the leading edge in adapting to modern practices. Because of the number of children involved and the potential for improvement with relatively small effort, the large city provides fertile ground for materially bettering the quality of education enjoyed by a large number of children.

The large city is a relatively recent phenomenon in this country. In 1860 there were three cities with a population of over 200,000. The 1950 census lists forty-eight cities with 200,000 or more persons. This relatively recent development

in American life has created many problems, largely because of its newness in national experience. Its effect has the same impact upon the educational services of the city as upon all other aspects of city life.

City children come to school with a background far different from that of their rural contemporaries. Children in the rural areas have every opportunity to learn at first hand the economic, political, and social processes at work in the community. This opportunity is largely or wholly denied to city children. If urban children are to understand these processes, such understandings must be gained through the school.

As a result, the need for a new type of education has been recognized. Training and appreciation in the fields of fine and industrial arts, vocational education, citizenship, health and physical education, homemaking, and the like have come to be included as important factors in the curriculum.

The application of rural-school organization and administration to the large city has created additional problems. In rural areas the school is the instrument of the people. In the large city it has ceased almost entirely so to be. The school in the large city derives its character from the central office more than it does from the people of the particular school district. This factor, plus the increasing complexity of education, has caused the city school to grow away from the immediate community which it serves. In the words of Mort,[1] "One of the chief weaknesses of the big city system is that it seems to cut off the operating units from the powerful influences of the public."

The size and educational structure of our large cities cause their school systems to resemble those areas having centralized control rather than the local control we claim for our

[1] Mort, Paul R., *Principles of School Administration,* p. 218. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1946.

schools in America. Mort found that in many ways our large city school systems resemble the centralized system of the Union of South Africa.

Centralization of large city school systems has helped in some respects. Financially the poorer districts in the city are enjoying a better educational program through the broadening of the tax base than would be the case if each school district in the city were on its own financially. This broader tax base is often coupled with a higher tax rate, and together these provide funds for more comprehensive governmental service. Usually the educational staff of a city is of good quality, and this should influence adaptability in a positive direction. In the great majority of cases the professional leadership provided in a city system is at a high level. Teachers get and use many ideas which do not originate with the professional leaders of the school system. In addition, the large community is the source of more complex and more stimulating experiences for the school staffs.

Then, too, the city school system as a whole was improved for a time by making the program uniform in all the schools. Procedures which worked best, as developed in local situations, were used as the base for such uniform program. This served as a leveling-up process by diffusing the most successful practices in the system in all the schools. Unfortunately, this leveling-up process has too often meant leveling down also. It seems characteristic of uniform programs that when machinery is set in motion to swing all teachers to approved practices, the same machinery interferes with further creativeness and inventiveness. This raises the serious question as to whether this leveling process will leave enough local initiative to point the way to continued improvement in the future.

Despite the advantages just listed, the large cities have re-

linquished their place as leaders in educational practice to communities of under 100,000 in population. This is chiefly because the smaller communities have more successfully utilized the advantages inherent in size of community while at the same time keeping in closer touch with the public.

Too often the city is treated as a single unit whereas practically every large city is a mosaic of widely different communities. There is often wide variation in educational level, ethnic dominance, population growth, median age, economic status, symbiotic characteristics, per cent of foreign-born, occupational level, health status, religious dominance, and many other factors which determine the character of a community. Westby[2] has made a careful study of these variations in community characteristics within a large city. It is impossible to arrange a single educational pattern that will fit all of these varied conditions from school community to school community. A bare beginning in recognizing these differences has been made by most city school systems thus far.

It is now the duty of the large city school system to realize more fully the advantages inherent in the large city school district and to be more diligent in offsetting the disadvantages that come from the large city district. Some of the disadvantages noted by investigators of large city school systems are: public apathy characterized by people interested in and busy with anything but education, inflexible financial structure, the lethargy in breaking away from tradition, the tendency of supervisory service to function in an inspectorial frame of reference, and the incomplete release of teacher, principal, and community initiative.

Is any course open to a city school system to offset the disadvantages of centralization, while maintaining the advan-

[2] Westby, Cleve O., *Local Autonomy for School Communities in Cities.* New York: The Metropolitan School Study Council, 1945.

tages? How can adaptability be encouraged and maintained in the large city so that needed adjustments to changes can be made as conditions require, without the tremendous lag which now characterizes our schools? Is it possible for the large city school system to place itself on the growing edge of educational progress? These problems are basic to the development of a program designed to encourage adaptability in an elementary school of a large city school system.

IV Ascertaining the Adaptability of a School

In order to proceed intelligently with the process of achieving greater adaptability in a particular school, it is wise to check on the present status of the school. Fortunately several measures are already available, having been developed to ascertain the elements present in adaptable schools.

The earliest of these is the "Lag Book" by Mort and Cornell,[1] *A Guide for the Self-Appraisal of School Systems*. This scale provides the opportunity to check on classroom instruction, special service for the individual pupils, educational leadership, physical facilities, and business management. Use of newer educational practices as discovered through experimentation and improved understanding to meet present-day needs can be evaluated with this instrument.

The Growing Edge, by Mort, Vincent, and Newell,[2] is a more recent scale for measuring the adaptability of schools and school systems. It is designed to detect evidence of the

[1] Mort, Paul R., and Cornell, Francis G., *A Guide for the Self-Appraisal of School Systems*. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1937.

[2] Mort, Paul R., Vincent, W. S., and Newell, C. A., *The Growing Edge*. New York: The Metropolitan School Study Council, 1946.

growing edge or most advanced application of modern practices in American education. Specific practices in the fifth grade are checked on the elementary level, organized under: the teaching of basic skills, the teaching of the areas of knowledge, discovery and development of special aptitudes of individuals through test and tryout, and the development of gross behavior patterns such as citizenship, character, and thinking. Implications for educators of recent discoveries in psychology, and of the importance of schools to society as reflected in specific school practices, are investigated and measured by this scale.

Another check on the degree of adaptability of a school can be found in *What Education Our Money Buys.*[3] Quality of education was linked with per-pupil expenditure. By comparison of one's school with practices of schools on a $75, a $115, and a $150 level (1943 dollars), a rough estimate can be gained of the extent of adaptability in one's own school. At present these levels would probably be in the neighborhood of $130, $175, and $260. It is cautioned that the purposes behind the practices are more important considerations than the specific practices themselves in estimating the adaptability of a school. Basic to this scale is the fact that, in general, the more adaptable schools have a higher per-pupil expenditure.

Growing out of the brochure just mentioned, a more detailed checklist,[4] known as the "101 Book," was prepared to be used in studying the power of education. The same general organization is used, but patterns of educational practice are evolved, each of which is in turn illustrated with spe-

[3] Educational Conference Board of New York State, *What Education Our Money Buys.* Albany: Educational Conference Board of New York State, 1943.

[4] Metropolitan School Study Council, *What Schools Can Do* (101 Book). New York: The Metropolitan School Study Council, 1944.

cific practices designed to measure the depth as well as the breadth of the educational program. Mort identifies four levels in the depth of educational program, ranging from the least adaptable to the most adaptable. The least adaptable schools emphasize teaching of knowledges and skills, more favored schools make these knowledges and skills more meaningful and useful, still more favored schools attempt to discover and nurture the growth of individual aptitudes, while most-favored schools are concerned with growth in types of behavior which are characterized as intelligence, character, citizenship, and personality.

A school which finds upon careful examination that its practices are as good as those described in this compilation of emerging patterns of school practices can be considered fairly adaptable. If its practices are better than those listed, such a school would be considered in the forefront of educational practice. As time goes on higher scores should be expected on this instrument, or a newly emerging instrument should be used.

A measure for polling public opinion on what the school program should be is provided by the questionnaire, *What Should Our Schools Do?* [5] One hundred questions are listed which the parent marks to indicate his agreement or disagreement. These questions cover: 1. willingness to accept change in the local educational program and research or experimentation in various aspects of the local school situation, 2. readiness to accept an intellectually tolerant point of view, 3. approval of extending the scope of educational service in areas beyond those now generally accepted, 4. desire to broaden the curriculum, 5. willingness to reject the theory of formal

[5] Mort, Paul R., Cornell, F. G., and Hinton, N. H., *What Should Our Schools Do?* New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1938.

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discipline, 6. acceptance of the policy of education of personalities, and 7. acceptance of possible consequences involved in a program of liberalization of the educational program.

Since adaptable schools require adequate understanding of the nature of good schools on the part of the public, this scale can aid the principal in knowing how well the community is following his educational leadership. Similarly the poll may be used with the teaching staff. Scores for the teachers of Pennsylvania and for a midwestern city are included to serve as a basis for comparison.

Another scale that can be used to augment the self-appraisal of a school is the *Elementary School Inventory*,[6] issued by the New York State Education Department. It consists of two parts, a checklist and a digest. The checklist is used by the staff of an elementary school to determine which ideas and corresponding practices it wishes to continue and which it wishes to discourage or eliminate. The staff can identify which patterns it considers desirable, which it has put into effect, and which should be given greater encouragement in view of its own philosophy and local conditions surrounding the school. The checklist is organized around guidance of pupil growth through: 1. curricular experiences, 2. organizing and implementing the educational program, 3. school, home, and community relations, and 4. recording, evaluating, and reporting. The digest is a classified list of excerpts from publications of the State Education Department containing recommendations to correspond with the checklist.

Morrison[7] prepared a scale for determining the extent to

[6] The State Education Department, *Elementary School Inventory*. Albany: State Education Department, University of the State of New York, 1941.

[7] Morrison, J. Cayce, and Ruegsegger, Virgil, *A Scale for Rating Elementary School Practice*. Albany: The University of the State of New York Press, 1943.

which the concepts of the activity movement were operative in a school. The scale is organized around methods, materials, atmosphere and environment, and relationships. For rating purposes a five-point scale is used, with descriptions for ratings of one, three, and five and deducing two and four as a stage of development between the two related definitions. Ratings run from formal to informal. This rating scale may be used for an evaluation of procedures or as a basis for improving practice to make for greater adaptability.

Recently the classroom teachers and principals of elementary schools in New Jersey devised an instrument for self-evaluation.[8] Consideration is given to matters of the curriculum, the community, personnel, organization and finance, and the school plant. Its purpose is to improve objectives and methods for attaining these objectives by school children and thereby produce more adaptable schools.

The group of measures here given does not cover the complete range of materials available for the evaluation of a particular school, but it does include those used in the succeeding chapters. Use of any one or a combination of these techniques for evaluation is sufficient to give the principal a clearer picture of just how adaptable his school is and how great is his task of leadership to produce, and then to maintain, a more adaptable school.

Researchers contend that an appreciably higher level of adaptability obtains in those schools which conduct self-surveys—reason enough for the principal and his staff to accept the importance of employing these evaluative instruments. The self-surveys used by the principal and the staff of

[8] Department of Education, *Self-Evaluation in the Elementary School.* Trenton: State of New Jersey, Department of Education, Elementary School Bulletin No. 11, 1946.

a specific elementary school will be referred to at appropriate points in the development of Chapters V through VIII.

Let us now consider what can be done operationally, that is, within the present structure of a city school system, to make a school in that system more adaptable. In order to clarify and interpret the generalizations developed in succeeding chapters, data concerning a single elementary school were collected and analyzed for their implications to the adaptability of this school. This elementary school, in a large city school system, shall henceforth be referred to as "the selected school." The use of a selected school has the additional advantage of aiding the principal of any elementary school to construct a bridge between the specific situation in which he operates and the generalization referred to in this investigation.

V The Principal Accepts the Challenge

Research in adaptability has uncovered many factors which influence the ability of a school to eliminate outworn practices and to be ever on the alert for better ways of educating children. This chapter considers the specific contribution which can be made by an elementary-school principal to the increasing adaptability of his school. If he accepts the challenge to make his school more adaptable, what can he do to promote a greater effort to adapt the educational program of the school to newly emerging needs?

IMPORTANCE OF THE POSITION OF THE PRINCIPAL

In his study of the factors which are most conducive to adaptability among the white elementary schools of St. Louis, Ebey[1] checked on eight selected factors related to adaptability in those schools. He found that by far the element which contributes most to adaptability is the principal, inasmuch as

[1] Ebey, George W., *Adaptability Among the Elementary Schools of an American City*. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1940.

recency of the principal's training and the principal's educational opinion bore the highest relationship to adaptability.

Acceptance of Ebey's analysis means that the principal of an elementary school can take a long step toward making his school adaptable. It is entirely within the principal's power to retain recency in his training. As his experience accumulates, the principal must return to a good teachers college from time to time for modernization of his educational concept. Ebey recommends five years as the interval within which the principal's training may be considered recent. This suggests that it should be brought up to date at intervals of not more than five years.

A recurring recency of training, which such suggested practice would insure, would have much to do with the principal's educational opinion. It is rather imperative that this reflect the most advanced thought and research, if the principal is to influence his school in the adoption of worthy adaptations. His educational understanding should include: 1. an understanding of the school's role in society, 2. a clear concept of the purposes of the educational program offered in his school, 3. a desire to incorporate in this program all adaptations already found fruitful in carrying out these purposes, and 4. the operation of his school in such a manner that it will tend to be a part of the growing edge of educational practices in elementary schools throughout the nation.

Coupled with a plan of periodic training, the principal can aid adaptability by stimulating his educational understanding through a variety of activities. Keeping abreast of educational developments by reading and acting upon the best suggestions found in professional literature is a time-honored means employed by many outstanding elementary-school principals. The value of such professional literature is intensified if the principal is a frequent contributor to educational magazines

and journals, especially if these contributions result from experimentation with adaptations within his particular elementary school. Such activity would call forth the best in his training and his experience with that particular school and community.

Becoming a part of the Metropolitan School Study Council would yield rich dividends. Failing this, every effort should be made to keep abreast of the studies published by this very active council. The Metropolitan School Study Council is composed of a group of over 400 school communities in 70 school systems in the metropolitan area of New York City. The specific purposes of the Council are: 1. to analyze the factors which contribute to the adaptability of schools and school systems, 2. to incorporate into the practices of these schools the innovations of proven value, and 3. to experiment with invention in education to the end of utilizing the position of leadership which these schools have demonstrated. Bigelow[2] found that the median time necessary for three per cent of the Council school systems to adopt a new practice is just a little over seven years, or one half the time found in the Pennsylvania study and others. This indicates that the Council schools have considerably better than average adaptability.

Such association with other educators for the purpose of examining the factors which contribute to adaptability, and experimenting in the guidance and direction of various schools in the adoption of patterns of adaptability, may prove stimulating to a principal's educational opinion. Thus the principal will gain the benefit of the thinking and experience of others interested in developing schools that are as

[2] Bigelow, Merrill A., *Discovery and Diffusion in Pioneer Schools*. New York: unpublished Ed.D. project, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1947.

good as we can make them, and he will have a sounding board for his own ideas and practices.

Often a principal will hide his desire to maintain the status quo behind the excuse that in a large city the systematization of the schools prevents individual action. This contention is exploded by Westby, who found in the examination of sixteen selected communities, eight of them sub-areas of a large city, that the amount of leeway for local action was such that, if properly used, broad and significant changes could be accomplished. By actual check, 88 of 101 items were designated as definitely within the authority of the principal. Thus, working within the rules and limitations imposed, the principal of any school should find sufficient leeway to improve the adaptability of his school, assuming that the leeway is anywhere near that found by Westby.

Some supervisors report that teaching principals seldom object to their suggestions for change. Resistance usually comes from full-time principals. If this experience is at all typical, it indicates a disadvantage of elevating a teacher to a position where exercise of authority becomes the chief function. This is a serious condemnation, unfortunately often justified, of many who hold the position of full-time principal.

What are the implications here that should be carefully considered by a non-teaching principal? Does it imply that: 1. supervisors tend to know more about what constitutes a good school than do principals, 2. supervisors tend to be more interested in school improvement than are principals, 3. principals and supervisors do not always work cooperatively for the benefit of the pupils, or 4. when a teacher becomes a non-teaching principal his interest in the needs of children often declines and his efforts to meet these needs tend to become static? None of these implications need apply if the principal keeps alert in his profession.

In any case, it would serve to strengthen the principal if he examined himself in the light of the implications contained in the preceding paragraph. If any of them apply, then the task involved in preparing himself for a more positive role in the improvement of his school becomes clear. Top personal efficiency of the principal is a prerequisite for achieving an adaptable school. It would be most difficult for his elementary school to rate high in adaptability if the principal thought and acted in terms of educational practices used at the turn of the century.

Fortunately the status of the principal has been improving steadily in recent years. Many cities already require a minimum of a master's degree of the candidates for elementary principalship. The newer principals must hold the permanent Elementary Principal's Certificate in most states, and in some they also hold the General Supervisor's Certificate. The background of preparation for the elementary principal is as great as, if not greater than, the requirements for a supervisory position. But this is not sufficient. In addition the principal must insure continual modernization of his understanding of education, as indicated earlier in this chapter.

Added to these factors there must be a willingness on the part of the principal to effect the changes needed to bring his school up to the level at which we know schools can function. If this is done there will be little question as to whether the principal is an obstacle in the path of progress for his school or the driving force that makes progress possible. An interest in becoming such a dynamic force has caused many principals to wish to familiarize themselves with the work of the Metropolitan School Study Council and with the studies already made in adaptability as, perhaps, the best means to accomplishing this end.

Key Position of the Principal

We are one of the few nations with a well-founded system of public education to believe that local initiative is necessary for the perpetuation of good schools. It is a fundamental principle of American education that the best schools, the most adaptable schools, are produced by decentralization of control. In a democracy, where so much depends upon the development of an intelligent electorate, it is essential that we have the best schools it is possible to produce.

Despite these facts there has grown, as our cities grew larger, a condition characteristic of state-operated school systems (as developed in Chapter III). Because these large city systems have begun to take on some of the characteristics of state-controlled school systems and find it difficult to realize the advantages of decentralization, they have become less adaptable. In the words of Cillie,[3] "Centralized systems are less adaptable because they are preoccupied with efficient functioning at their present peak of usefulness and the sheer difficulty of effecting continuous change in such a vast enterprise." The responsibility for requiring changes whose value is as yet unproved in educational practice is often too great for even the superintendent or assistant superintendent to care to assume. As a result the large cities have moved definitely back of the growing edge, tending to adopt only those changes that have already been proved in practice.

One way out of the present dilemma is to give more power and authority to the principal of each school in the city system. This allows for adaptation of each school to the unique conditions found in its own school community. Some cities have already moved in this direction. The Superintendent of Schools in Newark, New Jersey, has exhorted his staff of prin-

[3] Cillie, Francois S., *Centralization or Decentralization.* New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1940.

cipals on more than one occasion to proceed as educational leaders in their respective school communities. In a recent report to the Board of Education[4] the superintendent writes, ". . . individual school principals are encouraged to serve as community superintendents of schools to aid the public in understanding the purpose and function of the schools." The older notion of the principal as the principal teacher in the school must be supplanted by that of principal educator in his school community.

To accomplish this end the principal must have sufficient clerical help to raise him above routine matters. He must not be tied to his building for certain hours of the day but should be free to apply his time as most needed. It should be accepted that work in the community is as important as or more important than work in the school building. An assistant superintendent should be available to help the principal in developing and carrying out the role of principal educator in his school community. It is now generally accepted in principle that the most helpful pattern for the school principal is the superintendent of the small well-supported community school system.

One of the disadvantages of the large city school system is the uniformity from school to school. The principal is in the best position to break this uniformity in his individual school where doing so would facilitate adaptability. Once the principal of a city school acts in the role of principal educator in the school community, he can proceed more rapidly with needed adaptations. Aiding him in this direction is the tendency for variation from school to school in most cities. In one city Mort scored several teachers in each of four schools on adaptability by checking on twelve adaptations. Using a 24-

[4] Herron, John S., and Staff, *Our Schools in the Changing World.* Newark, N. J.: Report to the Board of Education, 1944–45, 1945–46.

point scale, he found variation in school averages from 7.55 to 13.8 points on the twelve adaptations in these four schools. There was variation in adaptability from .60 to 2.00 points among teachers in the same school.

The great opportunity for variation among schools and among teachers in the same school leads Mort[5] to the conclusion, "The fact that each of these schools is under the direct supervision of a different supervisory officer points again to the hypothesis established by Ebey and confirmed by observations in the Pennsylvania study by Mort and Cornell as to the crucial position of the principal in the adaptability of his school."

Aims of Education

It is the consensus among present-day educators that our educational program is designed to provide well-rounded development for each child and to integrate him in the social structure of which he is a part. Mort and Vincent[6] write:

> Our purposes in bringing up our children have always been the same. They are two. The first is an individual one: to develop each youngster to the highest degree which he is individually capable of attaining—in body, mind, spirit, character, and feelings, and in personal, economic, home, and civic competence. The second is a social one: to replace our generation with a rising generation that is at least as competent to cope with the problems of community, state, nation, and world as the older generation.

The 1948 report of the Educational Policies Commission sets forth these same two values but divides the first into two parts.

[5] Division of Field Studies, Institute of Educational Research, *The Report of a Survey of the Public Schools of Newark, New Jersey*, Book A. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1942.

[6] Mort, Paul R., and Vincent, W. S., *A Look at our Schools*. New York: Ronald Press Company, 1946.

If the principal is to develop a clear concept of how his school can be made more adaptable, he must understand the needs of the boys and girls in that school and base the goals of the educational program on these needs in terms of the major objectives just listed. In his *Principles of School Administration* Mort[7] writes,

> Since, essentially, an up-to-date school system is one that meets the needs of boys and girls in terms of the objectives we hold for them as individuals and for them as participants in society, it is clear that the essential needs must be recognized by those who are aware of these objectives and are at the same time in close association with boys and girls.

We look, then, to the principal of the school to be: 1. a student of the purposes of education as recommended by various frontier thinkers in modern educational trends, and 2. a student of the needs of the boys and girls in his school.

Fortunately much attention has been given in recent years to the question of just what goals we should strive for in the education of our children. Such reports as those developed by the Educational Policies Commission[8] and such critical studies of elementary education as those by Caswell[9] and McGaughy[10] serve to orientate the principal's educational opinion as to the general goals of his school. As a partial clue to their needs it is helpful, too, for the principal to have a rather thorough knowledge of how children from the ages of two to sixteen develop and mature. Further light on the needs of boys and girls in a particular school must be gained

[7] Mort, *op. cit.*

[8] Educational Policies Commission, *The Purposes of Education in American Democracy*. Washington: The National Education Association and the American Association of School Administrators, 1938.

[9] Caswell, Hollis L., *Education in the Elementary School*. New York: American Book Company, 1942.

[10] McGaughy, J. Ralph, *An Evaluation of the Elementary School*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1937.

by careful study of these pupils in their school and in their community setting. Without this background many potential adaptations may seem unnecessary and many adaptations already in effect may seem relatively unimportant to the principal.

Along with the appreciation of the highest values as goals for his elementary school the principal should understand the methods, techniques, and devices best calculated to promote and realize these objectives. A noteworthy combination of clues for realizing desired aims in actual practice, as gleaned from the work of psychologists, physiologists, biologists, and anthropologists in the field of child growth and learning, is that which appears in the Educational Policies Commission[11] report: "1. Development and growth are continuous, 2. behavior is learned, 3. learning and growth are stimulated by both security and adventure, 4. each individual is unique, 5. we learn what we live, 6. we always learn several different things at once, and 7. we learn a great deal and learn it rather permanently by example." If the principal and teachers can follow these guides in their efforts to achieve worthy goals, a large step forward will be realized in making the school a better school and in discovering many additional adaptations, with the effect of improving the educational program of the school.

The principal's aims should be subject to continual revision. He may not allow crystallization to take place. Regardless of how high the level of crystallization, it will mean the end to further adaptation. As Caswell[12] puts it: "An aim is the organizing, directing force in experience. Aims determine the selection, appropriateness, and sequence of activities.

[11] Educational Policies Commission, *Education for All American Children*, pp. 5–7. Washington: The National Education Association and the American Association of School Administrators, 1948.

[12] Caswell, *op. cit.*

They arise out of situations in which the individual is dissatisfied with things as they are and is seeking to change conditions."

In recent years, educational research has demonstrated the need for reconsideration of the place of the school in society, methods of instruction, the content of the curriculum, the design of school buildings, and the means for keeping the school sensitive to this change and disposed to make desirable changes. The desires and needs of individuals, families, and social groups are being more accurately interpreted today than ever before. The future development of any elementary school will depend largely on how thoroughly adaptations are made in the light of these developments.

Realizing the Aims

An examination of his school to determine to what extent it contains the characteristics of a good elementary-school program will aid the principal in evaluating how well the school is already adapting to the purposes of education. The "Lag Book," *The Growing Edge*, "The 101 Book" (all mentioned in Chapter IV), and Caswell's "Check List on General Characteristics of a Good Elementary School" are among the instruments that may be used for this purpose.

Study and treatment of the problems faced by city children by teachers, principals, superintendents, psychologists, and psychiatrists has suggested to these individuals that the usual school year does not provide sufficient supervision of children's time throughout the year in our cities. In urban communities, where farm chores do not consume the summer days of children in a worth-while way and, in general, only a small percentage of the children in cities can count on diversion at camps, the seashore, and mountains, efforts must be made to guide children during the long summer months.

Extended school services have made some progress in filling these needs in some city schools by providing after-school recreation and summer recreation. Summer-school programs augment the recreation program. Private agencies contribute their bit to the total picture. But lumped together, all of this affects only a small portion of the total problem.

In the latter months of World War II, the desirability of summer camps for the children of working mothers reached an advanced stage of planning. The sudden withdrawal of Lanham funds probably prevented a widespread swing to this idea throughout the nation. Now we have a renewed interest in the possibilities of camps operated by the schools, as a result of the focusing of attention on this type of activity by the Educational Policies Commission.

The use of a campsite in a nearby rural area, coupling a small amount of farm work with a large amount of recreation of all kinds, offers many advantages for the city child. It can contribute much toward improving physical and mental health. Child guidance departments have used camps for a long time as an opportunity to place children with problems in a new environment as an important element in the treatment of these problems. There have never been nearly enough camping opportunities available for the placement of these children. It would require several books to enumerate all of the advantages to be derived from a camping experience for every city boy and girl.

The camping program may need to be coupled with an all-year school program to give it stability. Experimentation with the all-year school has already been made. Drastic financial curtailment in the depression years forced an end to this promising phenomenon. Now we must discard the type of "holding the line" thinking that has characterized educational leaders and move out instead on a broad front of

salesmanship, to make possible the best sort of elementary-school program. The principal can begin by planting the seeds for a larger all-day program and an all-year program, including camping opportunities, in the minds of his school parents. Active support of administrative officers who advocate this type of program will stimulate its realization.

A move toward a longer school-connected day has been made by many city schools through the expansion of play facilities and by taking the first steps toward providing a community-school program. The community council can plan and take steps toward realizing a full community-school program. The administration in some cities has evidenced willingness to do its part in the provision of this type of service in those school communities that indicate a need for and a disposition to support such a program.

Some schools already have in operation a summer school and a summer recreation program. To add the camping feature will require careful planning and the use of all possible aid by the principal. The greatest task will be to overcome the inertia which invariably resists the introduction of a new idea. Once this obstacle has been surmounted, progress should be more rapid.

Guidance

One of the adaptations of recent years, designed to meet pupil needs, to which the principal should give careful attention is that of guidance. Now that the extension of educational opportunities is no longer a major issue, one of our opportunities in education is to improve the quality of the great educational service that has been built. The area of guidance, including personal, educational, and vocational, offers the richest return for our efforts. Too long has guidance been thought of and administered as an offshoot of education.

Guidance is not and cannot be a special type of education to be applied here and there during the twelve-year curriculum. Rather, guidance is and must now be an integral part of every teacher's duty. Should not every school be operated to take advantage of the values which attention to a proper program of guidance can offer?

A good testing program must be followed by a high quality of counselling, preferably by the classroom teacher, if a program is to be effective for individual guidance. The testing program should find each child's learning rate, his growth in fundamental information and in work-study skills, his growth in social, scientific, and esthetic attitudes, his growth in out-of-school and in-school interests, his family background, his growth in critical thinking, and his development in personal-social adaptability. The information thus gained should be coupled with a thorough understanding of the community—its advantages and disadvantages. Each teacher must be developed to think first in terms of what is best for the child, taking into consideration individual interests, abilities, and aptitudes; only after that should he think in terms of the subject matter taught. The principal must be prepared to adjust the operation of his school, where practicable, to better fit the school to the needs of its pupils.

The staff of the school must see the educational program during school hours as a way of life for the pupils who attend there. Living during school hours must be coupled with best living offered by the community, if the offering of the school is to be meaningful and enlightening to the child. As stated by the Educational Policies Commission:[13]

The principles of effective learning and the standard of ethics combine to make us see that a good elementary school is a place

[13] Educational Policies Commission, *Education for All American Children, op. cit.*

of excellent living. Since the child learns what he lives, the good school is a place where life is as good in quality as the community can devise and provide. Since the child also lives part of the time outside the school and is learning all the time, the good elementary school is concerned with the quality of life of children in their homes and elsewhere outside the schoolhouse walls. It is concerned with guidance which relates the good in the child's present living to an ever-widening greater good.

In the elementary grades major emphasis will be on educational guidance and personality development. For those who are not profiting by education beyond the sixth grade, vocational guidance leading to placement is needed. In the seventh and eighth years of school the guidance program will continue to emphasize the educational and personal phases, but increasing attention will be given to vocational guidance. The program at this level must be dovetailed with that of the high schools to which the graduates of the elementary school find their way.

Teachers should be made increasingly conscious of the capacities of the children in their classes so that they may refrain from demanding more in subject-matter accomplishment than the mental age of each child justifies. The elimination of grade standards in favor of working up to individual capacity has avoided a great deal of undue pressure on pupils at the lower end of the ability scale. When it is realized that most problems among city children develop from among children of dull-normal intelligence, this removal of undue pressure for subject-matter mastery will be seen as a preventive of many of the present problems in this group.

A good guidance program provides a challenging program for that small fraction of our population, the children who will become our leaders and creative thinkers. Beyond question these are our most valuable citizens, yet in the average

school they face the greatest waste of time and talent. These pupils must be given opportunity for creative thinking which seeks to find or devise new and better ways of achieving desirable ends and purposes.

The vice principal in the selected school[14] has prepared a list of pupils in every class as soon as they show decided promise. No longer is a teacher in this school allowed to think of her class more or less exclusively in terms of those with average abilities. More and more attention is directed to the needs of those children whose capacities are above average. These latter pupils are provided at every opportunity with roles calling forth leadership, initiative, and responsibility. Teacher aides, banking aides, library aides, lunch-ticket sellers, cafeteria hosts and hostesses, etc., are most frequently selected from this group of potential leaders. The principal is developing with the staff ways and means of enriching the curriculum for these pupils in order that they shall not be required to mark time while the other members of the class catch up with the average of class assignments.

A good guidance program in the selected school, where only about 12 per cent of the pupils have an IQ of 110 or better, will include courses in homemaking and child care, to prepare the girls for the type of activity most of them will engage in—home life rather than professional employment. The training of girls, and to some extent boys too, to make of the home an efficient, happy, cooperative enterprise can do much to improve the thoughtful rearing of children. Courses in cooking, sewing, household repairs, health, nutrition, child care, and consumer education will aid in this direction. The girls will need some instruction in household repairs in addition to the more traditional subjects. The boys should get a taste of the problems involved in nutrition and

[14] See last paragraph in Chapter IV.

cooking and in the wise selection of garments and clothing repair. All of these adjustments in curriculum have already been attempted on a trial basis at the school referred to, with good results.

If there is any doubt in the mind of the principal as to how such adjustment to pupil needs will be received by teachers or parents, the findings of Mort and Cornell [15] in their Pennsylvania study should be reassuring:

> Parents and teachers agree, for the most part, that schools should not expect all children to reach the same standards of achievement, and that changes in school organization and administration should never be made unless they improve opportunities for boys and girls themselves. A majority readily endorse the proposal that instruction and classroom activities of all sorts be adapted to the individual aptitudes of the child. In doing so, most parents and teachers believe that success in learning is greater when learning results from the incentives and interests of children themselves.

The last sentence quoted suggests the need for study of what represents interests of children at various age levels. Psychology is giving us increasing aid in understanding the drives and incentives of children.

An important step in personal guidance has been initiated in the school under discussion. Teachers of the first grade, though they have taken courses in psychology and have a good understanding of the growth and development of children of the elementary-school ages, are making an intensive study of the characteristics of six-year-old children. They wish to understand what can be expected of the six-year-old, how to make him happy and productive, and what the teacher must do to keep him that way. This study is being followed by case studies of behavior which deviates from the normal. The

[15] Mort and Cornell, *American Schools in Transition, op. cit.*

teachers are thus learning how to recognize atypical behavior in their own pupils and what measures the teacher may use to aid the child in solving his problems, to the end that he has a better chance of becoming a happier, better-adjusted individual. It is anticipated that the values resulting from this type of study will motivate other groups of teachers to make equally careful study of the respective age levels of the pupils they teach. From this information there should evolve a better understanding of the growth and development of children throughout the range of elementary-school ages.

Relation to Other Levels

Another adaptation which the principal can profitably use as a guide to producing a better school is to insure that the program at any level is part of a comprehensive twelve-year program. Educators are becoming increasingly convinced that no program of educational improvement should be developed on one level unless it is planned as a part of the total twelve-year program.

Before introducing the science program in the junior-high-school grades of the selected school the teacher who planned to take over this instruction went to the local senior high school and discussed her program with the high-school science teachers. Thus science in this school is taught not only in terms of the problems of this particular school but also in terms of the larger setting of the total educational program. It is wise for the principal to make it possible for all teachers in his school to know, in broad terms, the entire twelve-year program, so that they may feel that they are participating in a unified project.

FACTORS AFFECTING ADAPTABILITY

In order to raise the level of adaptability in his school, the principal must know what characteristics favor adaptability and what characteristics retard it. He should then make a continuous study to ascertain whether the trends in his school community move in the direction of becoming more favorable or less favorable.

Know Factors Favorable to Adaptability

To make the program of his school as adaptable as possible, the principal must have a clear understanding of the findings of research in adaptability. This means a working familiarity with the results of investigations reported in Group A of the bibliography. Many of these characteristics have been indicated in Chapter II; others are included in Chapter X.

Research has disclosed that some adaptations prosper in a decentralized system of educational administration, some in a centralized system, and others independently of the type of administration. Of the 170 adaptations contained in the "Lag Book," the distribution was in the ratio of 5:2:10 in respect to the above-mentioned order. The adaptations which are markedly affected by the type of control favor local or decentralized control by a ratio of almost 3 to 1.

Consideration of some of the adaptations found to prosper best in a decentralized system of educational administration will provide the school principal with clues for understanding factors favorable to adaptability toward which he must strive if he is to make his school more adaptable. In decentralized systems, adaptations suggesting the capacity on the part of the administration to make changes were found. This flexibility is demonstrated by the fact that the elementary

program is outlined in terms of broad fields. Courses of study are modified to meet local needs and are continually revised. There is more experimentation with methods, devices, and materials not included in the courses of study. More teachers conduct research work and coordinate the work in various departments. A philosophy is put into action which was acquired by careful study. None of these evidences of an adaptable school are impossible in the city school studied, even though it is in a centralized system, for the check with the "Lag Book" shows this school already reasonably flexible. Once the principal and staff recognize the value of this flexibility and consciously promote desirable changes in the educational program, even greater flexibility may result.

It was noted that decentralized systems individualize their programs to a greater extent by allowing children in the elementary school greater freedom to move around the room for the purpose of consulting reference and similar material, use individualized instructional materials, utilize extracurricular activities for exploratory purposes, record outside activities in addition to outstanding achievements in curricular and extracurricular activities, and collect relatively complete permanent cumulative records. Many of these adaptations are being practiced in the selected school as checked in the "Lag Book." Further strides in this direction can be made by the conscious efforts of the principal. None of the adaptations just mentioned are specifically prevented by the fact that the school is located in a large city.

It was noted also that in the decentralized system there is greater teacher participation in curriculum construction, more experimentation with methods and materials in the course of study, more experimental materials placed in the school, more teachers conducting experiments with the encouragement of the superintendent, and more participation

by classroom teachers in the selection of educational supplies. It will be recognized that these characteristics of an adaptable teaching personnel are conditioned by the environment in which the teacher works. The school principal can go a long way toward motivating a democratic approach on the part of teaching personnel to make the aforementioned activities regular responses on their part.

There was a greater tendency by the decentralized systems studied to supply the staff with professional literature. The principal in the centralized system should take the steps necessary to increase the number of professional books, magazines, and bulletins available to his teachers. He should at the same time encourage teachers to make their professional growth continuous by having them participate in studies initiated within the school and in alertness courses sponsored by the city school system and nearby universities.

In connection with the curriculum there was vitalization of traditional subjects in decentralized systems by such means as: scheduling the work in terms of broad fields; giving time to the study of government; unifying such subjects as the language arts, mathematics arts, and social sciences in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades; and using a variety of reading materials in the classroom to stimulate interest in reading.

Except for coordination between the superintendent and community planning agencies, the school and community adaptations favored decentralized systems. Specifically, there was more home-school cooperation, greater tendency to study the community, better relationship of building plan to the composition and life of the community, more frequent use of trips and excursions; and the staff was more likely to belong to civic organizations in the community. Again, except for the adaptation of relating the school building plan to the composition and life of the community, all of these advan-

tages can be realized by a city school if the principal bestirs himself. Even the school building can be improved, in order to better serve community life, by careful planning and by exciting the interest and cooperation of the assistant superintendent of business administration.

Among the adaptations, other than those that prosper equally well under centralized or decentralized control, most change in buildings and equipment was accomplished by decentralized schools. It will be necessary to improve the financial system of most cities to permit greater expenditures for equipment and building renovations, before much improvement in this area can be expected in the individual schools of the city.

Thomas[16] separated the factors making for adaptability into two groups: those subject to slow change and those subject to rapid change. Accepting this division, the principal can hasten the adaptability of his school by acting immediately on those factors which yield most quickly to efforts aimed at school improvement. These factors include: public attitude toward the school, professional attitude toward schools, ampleness of professional staff, adequacy of expenditure, administrative setting, and operational level of the schools.

Starting with these influences on the adaptability of the school will get the ball rolling at good speed. Progress tends to beget progress. When results can be seen in a reasonable length of time, both staff and parents will be encouraged to further the program under the guidance of the principal. Later on, when the advantages to be secured from a more adaptable school are realized, the principal can turn more and more of his attention to the improvement of basic com-

[16] Thomas, Maurice J., *Increasing the Adaptability of Public Schools.* New York: unpublished Ed.D. project, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1943.

munity expectancy and basic staff potentiality—factors which Thomas declares are subject to slow change.

Keep in Touch to Understand Trends

As the studies of adaptability are constantly increasing, the principal must keep in touch with these emerging studies so that he may take advantage of new research reported in doctoral projects, books, and articles. Much time can be saved by doing so. Hypotheses proven by research can be adopted immediately, without the need for experimentation to prove their worth. Thus the school can be brought more quickly to a higher level of adaptability, and the time saved can be devoted to the study of adaptations which have not yet received the searching light of research.

After a study of schools in the Metropolitan School Study Council, Bigelow[17] concludes that of the two forces, diffusion and invention, diffusion is more essential for the rapid achievement of adaptable schools. He says:

> Diffusion seems more necessary than discovery, for our study of one year's reporting shows 55 technics had been working in various schools for from 1 to 16 years and yet they had not permeated the whole council. It has been found that those schools which make one or more adaptations are more ready to adapt and so the rate of diffusion tends to increase if we can once get them started.

Thus a school can be improved without original experimentation if the principal will inform himself of the most recent studies in adaptability and then apply their findings to his school.

[17] Bigelow, *op. cit.*

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Know Factors Opposed to Adaptability

The principal in a large city school system who is aware of the characteristics of the system which tend to impede adaptability is in a better position to take advantage of favorable factors than one who is not informed. This knowledge provides the principal with a course of action that will be helpful in the development of a more adaptable educational program.

As approximately 57 per cent of the adaptations contained in the "Lag Book" prospered equally well under either centralized or decentralized control, it would undoubtedly be a waste of time for the principal of a city elementary school to attempt ways and means of securing more local control in these items. Even if he succeeded, little or nothing would be added to the adaptability of his school. In the meantime precious time and effort would be taken from projects which would make a difference. Items in this category include: recency of instructional materials, records of pupil adjustment, use of intelligence and achievement tests, program planning, taking personality traits as well as academic training and experience into consideration in the selection of personnel, teachers' meetings for the improvement of instruction, discussion of controversial issues, cooperation between the school system and local industry and commerce, accessibility of buildings, pupil-teacher classroom decorations, and making instructional materials available without undue formality, delay, and uncertainty.

Of the 170 adaptations studied, 11 per cent of them developed better under centralized control. These include such adaptations as: specialized educational opportunities in the field of vocational training, special schools, encouragement of continuous professional study by teachers in the system, nature study and science on the elementary level, and coordination

between superintendent and community planning agencies. The principal of a city school would retard the promotion of significant adaptations, therefore, if he spent time on developing these adaptations under local control.

Centralized school systems are less adaptable because: 1. they are preoccupied with efficient functioning at their present level of usefulness, and 2. it is difficult to effect continuous change in such a vast enterprise. Every change involves so many pupils and educational personnel that there is hesitancy about embarking on a new course of action. The onus of making an error of judgment in such a large undertaking tends to make for conservatism—often merely another word for lag.

One recourse in this difficulty, used by city systems, is to designate certain selected schools as pilot schools to try out adaptations not encouraged in the system as a whole. Every effort should be made by the principal to secure this status in the system as a step toward insuring a more adaptable educational program. Lack of such designation would make it more difficult for the principal to effect desirable changes in his school.

In an attempt to discern some of the forces operating to cause retardation within a particular city school system, the following were noted: 1. use of tests for interschool comparisons, 2. excessive reporting to the central office, 3. prudential nature of supervisory services, which makes for centralized authority rather than centralized helpfulness, and 4. deficiencies in instructional supplies. City-wide surveys, rather than being used to make comparisons among the schools of the system, should be made to guide the superintendent and his staff in the improvement of city-wide contributions to individual schools where help is needed. The present trend is for most testing to be of the diagnostic type prepared by

teachers for their own classes, for the purpose of pointing out areas of strength and areas needing reteaching for the individual teacher.

Though much consideration has been given to the reduction in the amount of reporting to the central office in many cities, a large share of the time of school clerks is consumed in preparing records, blanks, forms, and reports to the central office. If the principal can devise some means by which important information can be gathered and reported easily and quickly to the central office, he will be making an indirect contribution to the adaptability of his school.

UNDERSTANDING THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

It would be difficult for the principal to proceed intelligently with raising the adaptiveness of his school without knowing his school community in some detail. Information not already at hand must be sought and examined for its applications to a more adaptable school.

Surveys

Fisk[18] tells us in his important study:

> If an administrator wishes to build the public's understanding of its schools through acquaintance with what good schools can do —what the schools are doing, he must first make certain that his teaching staff knows and understands what is going on within the school system as a whole. This can be achieved only through a survey of present practices by the teachers themselves.

This is equally important to a particular school within a system if the principal wishes to make that school adaptable.

Some of the information needed by the principal is covered

[18] Fisk, Robert S., *Public Understanding of What Good Schools Can Do.* New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1944.

in Chapter IV. As new experiments are begun, additional surveys to discover specific information may be found necessary. The principal will be wise to secure pertinent information about his school, his staff, his pupils, and his community before embarking upon any adaptation. Much waste effort can be avoided by such an approach.

On the points covered by the "Lag Book" the selected city school scored 728 in 1948. In a check of 48 school systems with this instrument in 1937, the scores obtained for large school systems showed 126 at the low end, 424 as average, and 838 as high. On this basis it seems safe to asume that the selected school ranks between average and high in adaptability. Thus it is apparent that this school cannot be classed as a pioneer school but more nearly as an early follower. There is sufficient latitude indicated in which the principal of this school can work to make his school more adaptable. On the other hand, the fact that this school did not fall nearer the low end indicates that there are many favorable features already present on which the principal can build to more desirable ends.

In a check on eight schools within a large city school system by use of this instrument, Mort found that six fell within the 250- to 600-score range, which is considered fair from the standpoint of adaptability expectancy. Two of the schools scored above 600, which identifies them as schools high in adaptability. According to this analysis the selected school, a unit in the same city system, now ranks with the two best schools of those checked by Mort in 1942.

With the impetus supplied by this analysis the schools examined by Mort in 1942 have probably advanced in adaptability, for the disposition of the administration in this city is to act on the findings of these analyses. If the degree of growth were known, the new 1948 scores of the eight schools

previously checked would make a more accurate comparison with the present scores of the selected school.

If one considers only the scores of the selected school, it is apparent that pupil activities must be improved to secure greater adaptability. Pupil activity scores only 61 per cent as high as it could, thus suggesting the need for adaptations along this line. Provision for individual difference also rates low among the categories checked, with 67 per cent as good as it could have been. A careful check of the "Lag Book" will indicate in detail just where the principal of the selected school needs to apply effort in building a more adaptable school.

Application of *The Growing Edge* to the selected school reveals some cause for satisfaction and some reason for getting into action a program designed to improve the adaptability of the school. A summary[19] of the scores obtained from the evaluation of sixty-one school systems with this instrument shows:

Scores equaled or exceeded by 10% of the school systems	28
Scores equaled or exceeded by 25% of the school systems	22
Median	16
Scores equaled or exceeded by 75% of the school systems	13
Scores equaled or exceeded by 90% of the school systems	9

In this light the score of 24 obtained by evaluating the fifth-grade classes of the selected school would seem to place that school rather high. That it was no lower is probably due in large part to the relatively high per-pupil expenditure, which favors adaptability. That it was no higher is probably

[19] Mort, Vincent, and Newell, *op. cit.*

due in part to the restrictions on leadership in adaptability imposed by the large city system. It is significant that each of the four fifth-grade teachers had employed most of the adaptations listed, or one equally good, at some time. But these were used so seldom and so sparingly that all too few of them occurred during the four-month period specified by the instrument and therefore could not be credited.

A consideration of the results may indicate to the principal that the teachers have the knowledge to employ more good practices in their teaching, but that certain obstacles prevent the use of these practices as frequently as desirable. The principal should accept this interpretation as a challenge to remove these blocks to a more adaptable school, so that teachers may feel free to teach in a manner for which many of them are already prepared to teach. Only then will the school move perceptibly out on the fringe of pioneering schools that carry the level of elementary education to greater heights.

The teachers of the selected school found the "101 Book" most stimulating. They eagerly compared their practices with those listed and experienced great satisfaction when it was possible to describe a practice which they considered as good as or better than that in the published list. A series of bulletins has resulted in this school, since the initial study of this instrument, which lists school practices of the individual teachers considered as good as or better than the original list. Many of the teachers have adopted adaptations, most of them on a continuing basis, in order to check themselves on a par with practices considered superior in the elementary school.

Use of the opinion poll, *What Should Our Schools Do?*, reveals that the staff of the selected school has no teacher with as great a willingness to accept new practices as the teachers in Pennsylvania or the teachers in a midwestern city (see

Chapter IV). But, taking the staff as a unit, the third quartile, median, and first quartile scores are higher than those of the teachers of the other two groups just mentioned. This may indicate that there is no teacher well out on the leading edge in this school, or that the conditions in a large city tend to curtail thinking beyond a certain point. The higher scores at the quartile points may mean that this city employs better teachers on the whole than are found in a cross-section of a state.

Here is a challenge to the principal of any school to find the teachers on his staff who are most willing to go beyond present readiness for change, and then aid and encourage them to put this readiness into their classroom practices. Only in this way can educational plateaus be avoided.

It is unnecessary to analyze in detail the result of applying every evaluative instrument listed in Chapter IV. The results described above are clear. The situation at the selected school is anything but hopeless. At the same time, there is room for improving the adaptability of the school and ample evidence that many of the elements needed to accomplish this end are present but dormant. It is necessary for the principal to vitalize these elements so that his school may eventually take a place of dynamic leadership in pioneering elementary education.

Fisk [20] sums up the value of using an evaluative instrument by saying:

> It should furnish the educator with a far better knowledge of the present understanding of the possibilities of education by the group, individually and collectively. On the basis of the information gained he should be able to plan the approach and the areas which should be given primary attention by the group in gaining greater understanding and knowledge of modern education. In the

[20] Fisk, *op. cit.*

second place, the members of the group should find in the listing of the characteristics many challenges to their current knowledge of school program. Those practices with which they are totally unfamiliar, and those whose wisdom they question or whose purpose they do not understand, should raise questions in their minds which will be of help in initiating a program of study and discussion of what schools can do. The natural interest of adults in anything which affects children should provide sufficient stimulus to probing further into this problem of what constitutes a good educational program.

Changes Not Sudden

After the principal has become familiar with his school community and its needs through one or more surveys and is aware of the problems faced by the pupils, he will probably want to jump right in and make improvements right and left. Experience has shown that this precipitous approach is most often doomed to failure. As Mort and Cornell [21] put it:

> Significant adaptation will not come from any cataclysmic change in the mass pattern. Rather, like the changes that have occurred in our high schools since the turn of the century, they will come from discovering and meeting needs of individual boys and girls. The accumulations of such individual adjustments will eventually challenge mass methods and lead to organization for adaptation.

The key points for the principal to keep in mind are: 1. avoid too sudden or too widespread change, so that the values discovered in the past are not in danger of being lost; 2. discover and meet the needs of children, so that the emerging values of today may be recognized and utilized; and 3. use each opportunity, no matter how small, for the cumulative effect of these improvements will mean a more adaptable school.

The principal will do well to build adaptations on the

[21] Mort and Cornell, *American Schools in Transition, op. cit.*

combined thinking of teachers, pupils, parents, and public, for participation increases their eagerness for innovation before it becomes an official part of the school. A climate of educational opinion in the community that finds the new trend acceptable should be developed before the adaptation is actually introduced. Frequently a long period of preparatory work in the community is needed before the adaptation step is taken. The principal should use every channel of communication to make a contemplated adaptation well known in his community before putting the improved practice into operation.

Community Leaders

The principal may be at a loss as to how to arouse public interest in a more adaptable school. Reports indicate that a comparatively small number of unusually alert citizens may influence school policy out of all proportion to their number. By careful selection of the citizens to participate in these preliminary activities, education of the public can be made to count long before the great mass of the public is reached. This involves a knowledge of the community by the principal sufficient to make it possible for him to know and enlist the aid of those citizens who carry weight with others.

The principal will find some of these leaders among the white-collar workers in the community. Officers of organizations in the school community are good prospects. These people can be called together whenever the principal wishes to launch a new adaptation. Then, when the principal goes before the general public in the community, he can indicate the support of this influential group. The latter, in turn, will do some selling of the new project, each member on his own.

On this point Mort says, in the Newark Survey[22]:

[22] Division of Field Studies, Institute of Educational Research, *op. cit.*

> Groups of citizens whose judgment is highly regarded by their fellows in every school community in the city must come to understand education . . . There is no question but that, if the citizens of Newark had some understanding of these twentieth-century developments in education, their schools would be much more adaptable.

As these citizens become familiar with what the schools can do and with the best ways of doing things, there is a good possibility for change; for the schools inevitably reflect the thinking of the community as to what they should be.

Community Council

To date, the part played by parents and other citizens in furthering adaptability is relatively minor. This has been the choice of educators more than of the public. Within every community there are citizens who are prepared to work constructively in the roles of leader and follower which, if neglected, could become a negative force for the school. The principal should be on the alert to use the positive forces for leadership in his community, if for no other purpose than to prevent them from affecting his school adversely.

The principle of local control of education requires that professional leaders assume the responsibility for translating into action the interest of those members of the community who are vitally concerned with and are potential participants in educational matters. This relationship is the clue to retaining the pattern of local initiative, which distinguishes American education, in our large cities where we are rapidly losing this important feature. The principal will do well to draw upon the potential leadership in his community for sharing the responsibilities of improving the educational program of the school.

What is the best way to utilize this power for leadership in

the formulation of policy? A beginning can be made by enlisting the aid of community leaders as previously described. But stimulating the support of a few influential citizens whenever the principal wishes to popularize an innovation in the school program should be only a beginning.

A superior plan involves the formulation of a policy board composed of the principal of the school and influential members of the school community, who would meet regularly for discussion of the direction of education, the needs of children attending the school, and the changes needed to do a more competent job of educating the young. From this board of strategy new projects could be launched which would have a better chance of success because the community had been informed of the purposes to be accomplished by the project.

It has been the tendency of educators desiring to keep parents informed concerning school activities, to discuss only the surface aspects of the program. Little effort is made to go into the underlying issues and philosophy of education. In very few schools, particularly in cities, are there activities through which professional educators are attempting to paint, for the benefit of the community at large, an over-all picture of education to serve as a backdrop for the understanding of problems of curriculum or of child guidance.

The necessity for the educator to devote substantial time and effort to raising the understanding of the lay public is due largely to his own neglect. Because of the extensive and complex changes that have taken place in education over the past half-century, it has become increasingly difficult for even the professional educator to keep abreast of the developments in his field. As a result, the general public has drifted away from the intimate knowledge it once had of educational matters. This differential in understanding has caused many educators to feel that complete freedom in educational matters

should be theirs because the public does not know what is being done, or why. This attitude has served only to widen the gap already existing.

Now the educator is faced with the task of narrowing this gap if local autonomy is to be preserved. This can be done only by giving the people the power and machinery to influence schools if they are to become the best schools it is possible for us to have. The local advisory group is one device which permits the exercise of local autonomy even within a large city school system.

Often a principal and his staff wish to improve the educational offerings of the school but hesitate to take the necessary steps for fear of central-office, school-board, or public censure. Where principal and staff are supported in these experimental steps by a community council, and through the council by the community at large, the principal or teacher no longer stands alone but enjoys the approbation of a substantial segment of the community in support of the project. This kind of community support usually convinces those who might be inclined to apply censure, that the staff is proceeding with the full knowledge and consent of the lay public.

So long as there is a definite relationship between the attitude of the community and the adaptability of the school, the principal is wise to seek the approval of the community, through a community council, on matters of policy. Most principals will find that education in a republic such as ours is considered so important by laymen that citizens in the school community feel honored to be called upon to serve on the community council of the school.

Public Opposition

A strong force which causes many teachers and principals to hold to the status quo in the educational program is the

fear of parent opposition, real or imagined, to changes. Some parents feel that education was at its peak when they themselves were elementary-school pupils, and therefore look with suspicion on anything that is different. A good share of this feeling results from a lack of understanding of the need for change; hence a careful program aimed at the education of the public concerning the purposes for making changes will go a long way toward dispelling this feeling.

This inhibiting force need not produce lag in his school if the principal will keep in mind that even adaptable schools report community opposition. The principal must soon come to realize that not every citizen in the community will approve every adaptation made in his school. In fact, the more changes, or the greater the adaptability, the more chance is there for opposition.

In a sense, the principal can make up his mind that the lack of any opposition probably means public apathy—the force most apt to retard progress. It is the stirring up of the public with the new that causes reactions, some favorable and some unfavorable. The principal can reduce the degree of opposition by laying a good groundwork and avoiding precipitate action; for, though some opposition is stimulating, too much can result in injury to the program.

If the principal recognizes that little progress can be made if he attempts to overcome all objections to a new course of action before embarking on it, he will proceed in spite of minor objections and fear of criticism.

Problems and Issues Further Adaptability

Some educators avoid issues because they find them upsetting. Perhaps these are the individuals who are largely responsible for our present lag in education. They tend to meet issues with traditional practices whether these practices fit the

problem or not. Consequently society moves on while education marks time, until pupils and parents see little relationship between schooling and life around them.

The principal must be able to recognize the problems created by present educational methods and societal trends and to devise solutions for these problems. In the words of Caswell,[23] ". . . it is at the points where problems and issues arise that further progress will be made." The recognition of educational issues offers the best opportunity for creating a more adaptable school, for, if the solutions to these issues are approached through application of the best we know in education and through experimentation where knowledge is as yet lacking, it is probable that a better educational program will result.

STEPS IN THE PREPARATION OF A LIGHTHOUSE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Now that familiarity has been established through the preceding pages with the factors, discovered through research, which influence the ability of a school to adapt, it is time to consider what means the principal may use to increase the adaptability of his school. There are definite measures or steps which the principal may take to carry out the implications of the findings referred to in this chapter. Only in this way can the principal insure a school well out on the growing edge of educational progress—one which may serve as a lighthouse to guide other schools still submerged in the darkness of outmoded practices.

The Principal Becomes Aware of his Role

1. The principal must realize that he is the key person responsible for keeping his school abreast of the times. He must

[23] Caswell, *op. cit.*

measure up to this responsibility: a) by using every means to make his school more adaptable so that it will discard outworn and sometimes harmful practices and will adjust to the ever-developing concept of what is best in education; b) by returning to a good center of educational development within each five-year period for modernization of his educational conclusions, in order to remain a key person; c) by keeping himself informed of recent studies in adaptability, especially those developed through the Metropolitan School Study Council.

2. The principal must believe in the power of local initiative to produce good schools. a) He will use the advantages inherent in the centralized control of the city system, but will take the initiative to bring to his school and community an awareness of areas in which their direct action can benefit the educational program of the school, advantages otherwise found only in a decentralized plan of education. b) This entails a study of the degree of leeway permitted by the Board of Education and ways and means of using this leeway to the fullest extent in furthering the adaptability of the school.

Preparation for his Role

3. To succeed in the job of principal educator in his community the principal needs to have a thoroughgoing philosophy of education and of life, a knowledge of child and group psychology, an understanding of the social forces operating in his community and how to deal with them, a clear concept of the characteristics of a good school, and the ability to define problems and issues of education, which is the stuff out of which adaptations grow.

The principal must keep abreast of educational developments, be competent to select the more important of these developments, know how to interpret new theories and practices

to his staff, and have the ability to raise the level of understanding of parents to the plane of acceptance of these innovations in their school. Of particular interest will be the further research in adaptability so that proper cognizance can be taken of the discovery of additional conditioners of adaptability.

Role of the Principal

4. As principal educator in the school, the principal will assist the staff to an awareness of the steps that are necessary in developing a better school. He will participate with them in planning methods and procedures for achieving a more adaptable school.

5. In addition, the principal will serve as the educational leader in his school community. In order to fulfill his highest obligation to the welfare of children he must be a student of the needs of children and of society, especially in his own community. He must be willing to experiment in his school and community with ways and means of meeting these needs, and he should also be willing to pass along the results of this experimentation for the benefit of children in other schools.

Evaluation of the School Setting

6. The principal will assay the level of adaptability in his school by use of evaluative instruments. He will seek the help of reliable educators outside his school to assist in making such a survey as objective as possible. Categories in which the school is found to be adaptable should be carefully nurtured and strengthened. For areas low in adaptability a climate of educational opinion will be developed in the community, so that after a reasonable period of preparatory work the first steps toward adaptation can be taken with a reasonable assurance of success.

7. An attitude of critical evaluation of the school system must be encouraged by the principal on the part of teachers, pupils, and parents; for it is never certain where the germ of a new idea will originate. These new ideas must be carefully nurtured, lest they be lost, and examined for values not now being realized in the school.

Uniting the School and its Community

8. The principal of the school must break down the isolation of his school from its community. He will search out, stimulate, and identify his interests with the dynamic forces in the community as the best means of realizing the purposes of education.

9. The principal will set up an advisory group, as the key organization for community participation in the determination of school policies and the best means of keeping alive the principle of local initiative which characterizes the American educational plan. This advisory group or community council will be made up of teachers and parents who are broadly concerned with the interests and welfare of all the children in the community. This group may be initially selected by the principal, with whatever advice he has access to, and should be informed that it is convened on a tentative basis.

10. The principal will keep the council informed of what is occurring in the school and its probable effect on the pupils who attend. He will also keep the council informed of newer goals and practices in education, including those beyond actual practice in his school. He will raise problems and issues faced by education in order to encourage the careful thinking through of potential courses of action. He will point out ways in which the community could act to improve practices in the school.

11. The other council members will help the principal to

assess community advantages and disadvantages for children. They will do what they can to use the advantages in the development of boys and girls, while making every effort to minimize or eliminate the disadvantages. These same members will keep the principal and staff informed of what is going on in the community, particularly as it influences the boys and girls of school age. They will be alert to and keep the principal informed of community opinion, interests, needs, and understandings to avoid precipitous action which might endanger the actual realization of an adaptation. Surveys aimed at obtaining specific data on the school and its community will be made from time to time to amplify this exchange of information. Group meetings of interested citizens to discuss unmet needs in the school community will assist in defining areas where adaptations must be made.

12. The council will use every means to keep the community informed of what the school is doing and will gather information concerning public reaction to present school policies and activities, thus making the school an integral part of the community which it serves. Public opposition to change should be looked upon as an indication that the public is thinking about educational problems and is concerned about them. It should serve as a warning to the principal that the level of public expectancy has not yet been raised to a point where the layman can appreciate the value of this particular innovation. Opposition should never be used as an excuse for not improving the educational offering of the school.

Guide to Council Action

13. The council will study good schools in other parts of the city, schools in other city school systems, and pioneering schools of any locale, in order to better understand trends in education and the factors which aid and those which impede

a more adaptable school. They will take, with the help of the community, any action possible to offset hindrances and to enhance the action of advantages to adaptability.

14. The council will meet often enough to provide wise guidance for the pupils who attend the school. It will operate within the full limits of the leeway provided by the Board of Education.

15. From time to time the assistant superintendent or the superintendent will be invited to meet with the council to assist in solving current problems. With the help of the superintendent, an optimum balance between the centralized control imposed by a large city and local autonomy represented by council efforts will gradually evolve—a balance calculated to make it possible to realize the advantages of each. This is an asset in those communities where the superintendent and assistant superintendent are eager for development of the individual schools in the city and themselves do what they can to minimize the negative effects of the large city school system.

Facilitation of Council Efforts

16. Where initiative is curbed by existing city-wide policies, effort must be made to show the Board of Education the advantages denied by existing rules and regulations, so that changes might be effected to aid adaptability.

17. Council action must grow out of community understandings and desires. As soon as possible, council members who do not represent community thinking at its best must give way to more representative membership on the council. In this manner the council will more nearly become the chosen representative of the people who have for their purpose the development of the best possible educational pro-

gram as a vital factor in a grand program of needed social and institutional improvement.

18. Too much emphasis on how good a particular school already is must be avoided, for it tends to blind the public to needed improvements. Recognition of gains in making the educational program more adequate is desirable as these improvements become standard practice in the school. But such gains should be balanced with an equally forceful understanding of adaptations still needed. Thus citizens are left with the notion that they have a good school but that by giving effort, cooperation, and understanding they can have a better school.

Examples of Council Action

19. Some of the adaptations pressing for consideration by the community council of the selected school include: a) extended school services, including after-school, Saturday, and summer recreational activities for pupils attending this school, need expansion and improvement to fulfill the needs of children as discovered by the community council; b) summer camps, combining farm with outdoor recreational experiences, are a must for city children, a real opportunity for the community council to exercise its ingenuity under the professional leadership of the principal; c) a combination of extended school program and summer camping experience, when coordinated with other activities, points to the desirability of an all-year program; d) a community-school program implies activities for all ages in the community—many interests in the community can be served by the school if they are sought out and provided for; e) an adaptable school is impossible unless the principle of varying standards of achievement is accepted and applied, and it is up to the principal to take the initiative in popularizing and putting this approach into effective practice; f) personal, educational, and,

for those who need it, vocational guidance of pupils should characterize the work done by the professional staff in order to assist pupils in living richly here and now and in understanding and fitting into the social milieu around them; g) adaptability is improved if the principal develops with teachers at each grade level the concept that the work of each grade is part of a twelve-year program of development for boys and girls.

Relation of Diffusion and Experimentation in the Adaptive Process

20. The principal will take the responsibility for diffusion of known adaptations as the quickest means of creating a more adaptable school. Experimentation with adaptations will not be omitted but must be recognized as a slower process. The school can be made appreciably better simply by putting into practice what we already know about what constitutes a good school. As these adaptations can be made quickly, they should receive priority.

VI An Effective Teaching Staff

Closely allied with the efforts of the principal must be the work of the teaching staff if an adaptable school is to result. What are the characteristics of a staff which could operate to favor the development of a school into a leading elementary school? Buley[1] advances the idea that:

> . . . education gets its greatest encouragement in the realization that the quality and extent of a staff's output is dependent upon its total configuration. . . . the promise of education to fulfill its obligation to youth and society rests upon the competence of a school staff. Competence is obtained through an integration of the ability and assets of all, which recognizes the value of staff patterns and how they in turn contribute to the efficient functioning of the whole.

Buley came to this conclusion after comparing specific staff characteristics of the ten most adaptable schools with the ten least adaptable schools of the Metropolitan School Study Council. It should be studied carefully by the school principal in relation to his staff.

[1] Buley, Hilton C., *Personal Characteristics and Staff Patterns Associated with the Quality of Education.* New York: unpublished Ed.D. project, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1947.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

The professional background of a corps of teachers seems to have some effect on the adaptability of a school; hence the source of the staff, its training and preparation, its cultural background, its personal characteristics, and its variety of experience will be considered in connection with the staff of the selected school.

Source of Staff

There is good evidence to indicate the close relationship between a staff trained in a variety of institutions and the adaptability of the school in which it serves. By contrast, schools in which teachers come from but one or two institutions are definitely less adaptable. Mort and Cornell [2] discovered this relationship in their Pennsylvania study. It is a factor that is apparently working against adaptability in the selected school, where 72.5 per cent of the teachers received their basic teacher education in the same teacher-training institution.

Not only does the selected school have a larger percentage of its teachers trained in a single institution than even the least adaptable schools in large communities in Pennsylvania, but the number of training institutions attended by less than 5 per cent of the teachers in the selected school is low by comparison with either the most adaptable or least adaptable schools in these large communities.

Some effort must be made by the principal to secure through the personnel department more teachers who have been trained in colleges other than that dominantly represented by the staff. Transfer of teachers from the selected

[2] Mort and Cornell, *American Schools in Transition, op. cit.*

school to other schools in the same city system would not help appreciably, for the situation at the selected school is typical of all elementary schools in the city. Perhaps the principal and staff could make contact with the teacher-training institution where most of the staff was educated, and through suggestions and other means lessen the provincialism of this teachers college. In this way the negative effect of this type of inbreeding in the future might be reduced.

Since little change can be made in the present basic training of the staff in most schools, some mitigation of the existing condition will result if the principal will encourage the use of a wider range of teachers colleges for extension work, particularly during the summer when it is possible to attend more distant colleges. Subsequently the principal should discuss with individual teachers the content of their extension courses and encourage them to experiment with the valuable ideas gained. Ideas showing unusual promise should be presented at a staff meeting by the teacher taking the course, with the purpose of fostering, on a school-wide basis, adaptations of recognized value.

Training and Preparation

As the training and preparation of teachers affect the adaptability of the school in which they teach, the amount of, recency of, variation in, and breadth of training, as well as practice teaching and the undergraduate activities of the school staff, should be considered.

AMOUNT. There is a close tie between the adaptability-mindedness of teachers and the extent of their training. Elementary teachers with four years of training rated higher than those with less than four, while those with five or more years of training obtained the highest rating.

Referring again to the selected school, it is evident that the

staff has too large a proportion in the two- to four-year levels of training. Sixty-two per cent of the staff of this school is at the levels which Buley's study found to be related negatively to adaptability. This is better than the 81.6 per cent of the least adaptable schools of Buley's study, but not as good as the 57.9 per cent of the staffs of the most adaptable schools. Apparently it would aid the adaptability of the selected school for its teachers to take additional training so that a larger proportion than the present 12.5 per cent achieve five years of training. There is some hope in this direction, for 57.5 per cent of the selected school staff are now taking extension courses.

The principal should confer with teachers with reference to courses that would benefit them most in terms of their backgrounds and teaching performances. When this analysis is coupled with that of the adviser at the teachers college, it will result in the taking of courses with a professional purpose rather than in the acquisition of points to achieve salary increments.

Five years of training beyond high school seems to be characteristic of lighthouse elementary school staffs. Buley's data show a negative relationship between training and adaptability at the third- and fourth-year levels, a highly significant relationship at the fifth-year level, and a tapering off by the sixth and seventh years of college. For the selected school, with 60 per cent of the staff at the third- and fourth-year levels, this amount of training represents a drag on the adaptability of the school. It is to be hoped that the 57.5 per cent of the staff now taking extension courses will soon serve to increase the group at the fifth-year level of training.

RECENCY. On the elementary level Buley found a highly significant relationship every four years between additional pro-

fessional training and adaptability, a marked one for every five-year period, and a significant relationship for the six- to nine-year span. He goes on to indicate that six to twelve hours is the optimum number of credits to be earned by teachers during each five-year period among these Council schools.

Here the selected school appears to advantage, since 57.5 per cent of its staff have taken professional training within the year and 80 per cent of them have taken courses in the past five-year period as recommended. This record is well above that for the most adaptable schools studied by Buley. It is the duty of the principal to encourage teachers in this type of improvement and thus maintain it at a high level as one means of insuring an adaptable staff.

VARIATION IN TRAINING. The most adaptable staffs tend to have to a highly significant degree a greater percentage of those who have trained for another profession, than do staffs in low-adaptability schools. The selected school has among its teachers a ratio almost equivalent to the 11 per cent found in the most adaptable schools in Buley's study of those who were trained for another profession.

BREADTH OF TRAINING. Staffs with a broad training, resulting from professional courses in two or three different areas, tend to meet more successfully the changing needs of a dynamic educational program. The selected school has among its teachers a few more with this type of background than the least adaptable schools of Buley's study. Selection of teachers with a broader background of professional courses is desirable.

Training in professional courses of from 24 to 40 hours seems to contribute most to the adaptability of a school staff. Beyond 41 hours nothing seems to be added, indicating that

better selection of courses needs to be made or that the courses taken need to be applied to school problems more effectively. The proportion of teachers in the selected school in the most favored category just mentioned is higher than that of the ten most adaptable schools used by Buley. The principal can aid his staff by advising teachers with approximately 40 points in education to take some courses in other areas as they acquire additional training and to be more discerning as to which additional education courses they take. This will aid in dispelling any crystallization of thought, sometimes the result of too many courses in education, by providing a balance between educational information and liberal arts.

PRACTICE TEACHING. Buley found the relationship between practice teaching and adaptability inconclusive, inasmuch as a higher percentage of teachers in the least adaptable schools experienced practice teaching. He feels that the high regard usually held for practice teaching was not justified in his study. Apparently nothing is added to the adaptability of the selected school by the fact that the proportion of teachers having had practice teaching is greater than that of the least adaptable schools checked by Buley. A profitable investigation could undoubtedly be made of desirable substitutes for cadet teaching or, at least, of methods of improving practice teaching to prevent its apparent negative relationship to adaptability.

UNDERGRADUATE ACTIVITIES. The importance placed upon undergraduate activities and distinctions is not verified by the results of Buley's study of the characteristics of adaptable school staffs. Leadership recognition bore a relationship for elementary teachers, but academic honors and athletic achievement did not.

Cultural Background

Certain cultural aspects of a teacher's background which are related to the adaptability of a school should receive comment here.

CONCERTS, PLAYS, OPERAS. The cultural background of a staff as exhibited by attendance at concerts, plays, and operas indicates a slight but inconclusive tendency for the most adaptable staffs to move in that direction, according to Buley's study. Although the difference between the most adaptable and the least adaptable of the Council schools studied was not significant, the amount of this sort of participation by the staffs was great. Due, apparently, to inclination and convenience the staff of the selected school is greatly inclined in this direction, with 87.5 per cent of the staff attending more than four operas, plays, or concerts in the past twelve months.

READING BACKGROUND. In studying the reading habits of school staffs, Buley found that the least adaptable school staffs purchase and read non-professional magazines more regularly than the most adaptable staffs, and the reverse is true concerning professional periodicals. Apparently the weaker teachers are more interested in novels or the fiction type of literature than are their more competent colleagues. The degree of interest in the problems of education and the extent to which the solutions to these problems are considered vital determine whether educational literature is considered dry and uninspiring or is looked upon as an important source of guidance for future action.

More than half of the staff of the selected school is low in the number of non-professional books in personal libraries. But in the number of teachers who possess 150 or more books, the selected school staff is better than the most adaptable

schools in Buley's study. The staff ranks unusually high in the number of non-professional books bought during the past three years. The members of this staff were good readers of books of all kinds during the past twelve months. The principal should encourage wide use of professional books from the school library and other sources, to aid those teachers who are lacking in individually owned professional books.

Buley's data establish that the extent of library ownership is an important guide in the development of an adaptable school staff. He found a progression from: 1. a highly significant negative relationship for a personal library of less than 50 books, and 2. a significant negative relationship for a personal library of 50 to 100 books, to 3. a marked positive relationship when the size of the library reaches 151 to 300 books, and 4. a significant positive relationship once the library exceeds 300 books. The more books purchased, either professional or non-professional, the more the relationship favors adaptability.

With 12.5 per cent of the selected school staff having libraries of 300 books or more, this staff falls midway between the least and most adaptable schools of Buley's study. As there is a tendency for the most adaptable schools to lead in wide reading, the number of professional and non-professional books purchased by the selected school staff reaches a desirable level, although it is a bit low on the purchase of professional books.

TALENTS. As the quality of a school staff is not increased to any significant extent by the presence of teachers with one or more talents, it makes little difference that half of the teachers of the selected school have no special talents. Apparently nothing is added to the adaptability of the school by encouraging the development of further talents.

Personal Characteristics

Certain personal characteristics of a staff bear a relationship to adaptability.

AGE. One can usually produce a lively discussion among almost any group of educators concerning the age at which teachers are most proficient. Some administrators prefer teachers with large experience, while others prefer them direct from the teachers colleges "so they can train them the way they want them to be."

Evidence connected with the study of adaptability points to the desirability of more mature staffs if progress from this standpoint is desired. It is now apparent that older teachers are not necessarily so fixed in their teaching patterns that they are unprogressive and out of date. Nor is it true that younger teachers are more inclined to accept change because of their more recent training. As Mort and Cornell [3] point out, "From our statistical data there is a positive and significant but not high relationship, on the whole, between the median age of teachers in a community and the adaptability of the school system (r of .339)."

Buley's study substantiates these findings by indicating that the older the average age of the school staff, particularly if there is a large group in the age bracket 36 to 60, the more likely is its chance for adapting. In fact, he found that the relationship of average age and adaptability was highly significant at the elementary level. For the Council schools studied, an average age of 42 is the present pattern. The average age of the selected school is 42.9, which means that it is properly seasoned to adapt to newer practices. It indicates, too, a stable teaching staff for the pupils.

[3] Mort and Cornell, *American Schools in Transition, op. cit.*

SEX. Buley's findings indicate that the adaptability of a school will be increased if men comprise approximately 10 per cent of the teaching staff. In the selected school the percentage of men is 7.5, which indicates the need for an increase in the number of men teachers. However, if the increase of men teachers is due alone to the addition of conventional vocational courses it does not necessarily affect the general adaptability of the program.

MARITAL STATUS. Research seems to indicate little advantage or disadvantage to the adaptability of a school whether the teachers in that school are married or single. It is probably the best policy to maintain a balance of the two so that a staff does not become too predominantly single or married. As 55 per cent of the present staff of the selected school is married, the principal should influence personnel policy to provide fewer married teachers as replacements on the staff become necessary, in order to preserve a reasonable balance.

Variety of Experience

The kinds of experience represented by the teachers on a school staff bear a relationship to the adaptability of the school in which they teach.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE. Teachers with six years or less of teaching experience contribute little to adaptability. The seven- to fourteen-year service period appears to be the transition point from which it can be expected that the school will begin to get the full benefit of a teacher's tenure. A school and community can expect to get the most dynamic results during the ten- to thirty-year period of a teacher's experience. At the elementary level there is little tapering off during the thirty- to thirty-five-year period.

In the interests of stability of staff, the school principal should be loath to lose his more mature teachers, who have adjusted to the school and community and can make wise judgments on the basis of the understandings they have gained. Apparently there is little to be gained from a city policy which transfers its teachers from school to school at the end of certain periods of tenure; hence such practice should be discouraged.

At present there is too large a ratio of teachers in the selected school who have had less than six years of experience. This condition will correct itself in time if there is continuity in the plans of these younger teachers to establish themselves in teaching. The principal can aid by doing his part in making teaching attractive to these newcomers to the profession.

Buley's study supports the contention that the longer the average teaching experience, the greater the staff competence. He found that the most adaptable staff had an average of 18.3 years of teaching experience, while the average experience of the least adaptable staff was 15.2 years. He concludes that best results can be obtained when two thirds of a staff have been members of the same system for a period of from eight to thirty years. The remaining one third may be divided between the first seven-year period and the period from thirty years upward, with the majority in the beginning years of their teaching. The average teaching experience of the staff at the selected school of 20.2 years seems favorable to adaptability, in view of these findings.

TRAVEL. All indications point to travel by teachers as the most valuable kind of experience that they can have so far as adaptability is concerned. The results of Buley's investigation show: 1. a definite relationship between the least adaptable staffs and their lack of travel experience and the most adapt-

able staffs with their greater travel advantage, 2. that when the distance traveled exceeds 500 miles the relationship is even more significant, 3. that the greatest distance (1200 miles or more) a staff had ever traveled away from home at any given time was more consistently related to adaptability, and 4. that the extent of foreign travel has the most significant relationship to adaptability.

Although Buley's study did not attempt to ascertain why a greater background of travel made a staff more conscious of needs in its school and community, more alert to ways of meeting these needs, and more persevering in carrying out the adaptations designed to fulfill these needs, it is clear from his results that extensive travel does broaden the experience and extend the horizons of teachers in such a manner that they are better able to develop individual children to their highest potentials and thus help them to become worthy members of society.

The staff of the selected school compares favorably with even the most adaptable schools studied by Buley in the matter of travel experience of over 1200 miles from home, including foreign travel. As in many school systems today, the teachers of the selected school can and do earn salary increments through additional training or travel. The principal should encourage even more of these teachers to earn a good share of their equivalency credits by long trips which will carry them well beyond the limits of provincialism.

Work Experience

Work experience other than teaching by the staff of a school seems to have little beneficial effect upon adaptability. This seems to contradict the hypothesis demonstrated in several studies, namely that the richer the background of a staff the more effectively can it meet the needs of boys and girls.

If a staff is somewhat low in this particular, there seems to be little reason for encouraging additional experiences other than teaching.

ATTITUDE TOWARD IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATION

To aid in understanding the nature of the participation of the teachers of Pennsylvania in the introduction of nine specific adaptations, Mort and Cornell [4] devised seven classifications ranging from leadership, support, and followership to neutrality, ignorance, divided interest, and opposition. It was found that in the past the role of teachers has most frequently been that of follower, supporter, and neutral. In current efforts their response has most typically been that of neutrality, ignorance, and follower. Leadership in educational matters has not been high among teachers and apparently is diminishing.

Where change is desired which involves the cooperation of teachers, it is important to teacher enthusiasm that the change in question represent an adaptation that is clearly of value. If the leadership of the principal is adequate, teachers are more inclined to favor a better type of school once they are given an opportunity to work as participants in the process.

A comparison of the relative effectiveness of teachers in the role of leader and of supporter of adaptations shows that though the differences are slight they favor the supporter role. This indicates that the bulk of initiation of adaptations must still remain the concern of the administrator. Training of administrators and teachers for dynamic leadership through improved attitude toward change, and a better understanding on their part of the power of education, may make it possible

[4] *Ibid.*

for both groups to move perceptibly up the scale toward the leadership end.

Professional Alertness

Some investigation has been made of staff response to change which will now receive consideration because of its relation to adaptability.

TEACHER OPINION. Mort and Cornell[5] found that, in general, there was a highly significant difference in the means of teachers' scores on the poll of opinion, *What Should Our Schools Do?* between communities with adaptations and those without them. They conclude from these data that: 1. favorable attitudes generally toward education are indicative of certain aspects of fertility for adaptation which are important factors, even if indirect; 2. changes are more likely to be made in communities where the general tone of teacher sentiment is receptive; 3. other factors are operating which produce variations in the capacities of school systems to adapt —forces which would continue to operate even if, through a campaign of professional in-service stimulation, unfavorable teacher sentiment were to be removed; 4. the proportion of teachers in a community exceeding a relatively high point on the scale of public sentiment produces a somewhat higher relationship to adaptability than does the measure of the average level of opinion.

This suggests that along with other factors the principal can aid the adaptability of his school by doing more to turn the sentiment of his teachers to one which favors innovations. But most important is the discovery and encouragement of those few teachers who are near the top in desiring a better school. The principal should utilize every means at his com-

[5] *Ibid.*

mand to create a situation most stimulating to the teachers who are high in initiative and creativity.

It is quite possible, feels Hicks,[6] that there is causal relationship of a cumulative nature between measures of opinion and adaptability, indicating that the introduction of adaptations improves the attitude of personnel, which in turn develops a climate of opinion more conducive to making further adaptations. If Hicks is correct in this assumption, it follows that one of the most potent activities for the principal in producing a more adaptable school is to start the ball rolling by getting a few adaptations under way. These improvements will make it easier to accomplish further adaptations.

IDEAS FOR CHANGE. Buley's[7] data indicate a slight tendency for the most adaptable staffs to be possessed of more ideas for change and better results in trying them out. Otherwise there is little to differentiate between the most adaptable and least adaptable staffs as they relate to having ideas for change and then putting them into effect. Part of this is undoubtedly due to the structure, and part of it to the operation, of the educational program. Structure appears to give the teacher a relatively unimportant position in the educational hierarchy, and operationally much has been done in the past to fix this hierarchy firmly in the teacher's mind. If the principal wishes an alert staff, capable of independent thought and possessed of the sort of initiative which will result in the use of these ideas, he must operate his school in a manner which will enhance the desirability of individual thinking on educational matters and will provide encouragement for teachers to act on these ideas.

[6] Hicks, Alvin W., *A Plan to Accelerate the Process of Adaptation in a New York City School-Community*. New York: unpublished Ed.D. project, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1942.

[7] Buley, *op. cit.*

The number and quality of ideas for change listed by teachers of the selected school were relatively low. Most changes were of a minor or inconsequential nature. Few ideas involved fundamental changes in the actual teaching procedure of the teacher making the suggestion. This condition indicates that the principal should develop a program to clarify the needs of pupils and to improve the educational philosophy of the staff.

Attention can be given in staff meetings to suggestions which teachers have made for improving the school in order to encourage this type of thinking. Only when the principal demonstrates the attitude of seeking staff reaction to changes will teachers come forward with their own suggestions for the improvement of the educational offerings of the school. These suggestions must be given as careful consideration and action as those initiated by the principal.

SOURCE OF IDEAS. The need for teachers with broad contacts and an extended horizon is demonstrated by the tendency of elementary-school teachers in the most adaptable schools to believe their ideas for change to be original. Teachers feel that they get few ideas from administrators or teachers colleges, but they give some credit to other teachers within the school system for the source of ideas and adaptability.

Because the number of ideas listed by the staff of the selected school was low, the sources of ideas were proportionately meager. Of the sources listed, originality was highest. This may indicate a tendency on the part of teachers to make a part of themselves those changes they believe in. Next highest was the percentage of teachers who listed sources outside the school system as the source of their ideas. Administration and educational or teacher-training institutions were indicated least often as sources of ideas.

In this we see the need for a type of cooperative administration within the school which, rather than limiting its sources of inspiration to one person—the principal—draws upon every teacher in the school for creativeness and initiative. When this plan is combined with that of stimulating ever-widening contacts for each teacher, there should result a staff rich in resources upon which to draw for cues to continually better school practices. This might be accomplished through: 1. visits to other schools, 2. exchange of ideas and practices such as is provided by the Metropolitan School Study Council Exchange, 3. the study of adaptations described in professional books and magazines, and 4. staff discussion of innovations.

Understanding the Power of Education

Whatever may be the cultural and professional background of teachers, it seems clear from the studies already made in adaptability that a teaching staff could profit by a better understanding of what education can do as compared with the particular merits of their own grades or subjects. In earlier studies it was discovered that while teachers on the whole had somewhat of an advantage over the general public in their understanding of the power of education, a very large percentage of them were less well informed than the average members of the public.

With this observation Mort[8] indicates the importance to the school of having a definite program for the study of the power of education by the entire staff.

A beginning in this direction can be made through staff study of the "101 Book." Teachers should be invited to submit practices of their own which they consider as good as or better than practices reported in the "101 Book," and these may be mimeographed and distributed to the entire staff for discussion. The practices described by individual teachers

[8] Mort, *op. cit.*

should be evaluated, and the general emphasis in subsequent discussion would be on the adoption and adaptation of good practices by each teacher to his individual classroom situation. This beginning should be followed up with supervision by the principal and vice principal to assist in the adoption of practices considered good by a large proportion of teachers and the continued invention of equally good or superior practices.

"Here it is interesting to note," writes Mort,[9] "that the percentage of teachers having a good understanding had a better relationship with adaptability than the average level of understanding. This suggests that work on raising the level of understanding even with a few teachers will begin to pay dividends." This staff characteristic suggests the desirability of the principal's working rather intensively with the teachers who show strong inclination toward increasing their understanding of the value of their contributions to child growth.

Participation in polls of public opinion on education may serve to make teachers more critical of their own understandings. In Pennsylvania, Mort and Cornell[10] put their questionnaire, sent to parents of fifth-, ninth-, and twelfth-grade pupils, under the supervision of the teachers in the various communities sampled. McCormick[11] uses the teacher to instruct four pupils in either the eighth or the fifth and sixth grades to secure responses to the questionnaire, *What Do You Think?* Such contacts serve to stir teachers out of their complacency and cause them to take stock of their own practices.

[9] Mort, *op. cit.*

[10] Mort and Cornell, *American Schools in Transition, op. cit.*

[11] McCormick, Felix J., *The Measurement of Public Understanding of Education.* New York: unpublished Ed.D. project, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1949.

A series of staff meetings or workshops on a truly volunteer basis could be set up in the school to attract and build the better staff members into an even stronger influence for good education. Since only those who were really interested would participate, the time and effort so often wasted in attempting to inspire laggards could be applied to constructive ends. Educational problems could be picked up at a high level and carried to new heights, levels ordinarily not reached because of the need to overcome the resistance of the weaker members of the staff.

In such an arrangement the principal would not function on the usual basis. All participants would take part on an equivalent basis. Any leadership growing out of such a group would develop through ability to further the efforts of group thinking and group maturation. If the principal of the school was originally selected for his position on the strength of his knowledge of the power of education and his ability to meet the needs and desires of boys and girls, this arrangement will create little difficulty, for he will maintain his leadership through having the best educational background and through demonstrating ability to develop a significant educational program in his school.

PURPOSES OF EDUCATION. Many teachers feel that new ideas for improving education are fine in theory but do not work out in practice. Correlated with this is a reticence about making changes, even if these changes appear to be for the better, if it means discarding any of the older objectives, particularly that of passing along to new generations the cultural heritage of the past. Despite this fact 90 per cent of the teachers sampled by Mort and Cornell[12] record their belief

[12] Mort and Cornell, *American Schools in Transition, op. cit.*

that ". . . since things are constantly changing in the economic and social world the schools must also modify their programs to keep up with changes in problems of living."

A majority of teachers are aware that many of the practices in education used today exist simply because of tradition. There are relatively few teachers who do not believe that a better world would be possible if we took the means to improve the educational offerings of the schools. There is a strong feeling among teachers that we must go beyond the education of our children for the world as it is today.

It is vital, therefore, that teachers modernize their educational aims if there is to be hope of adequately improving the educational program of the schools. Leading educators are convinced that teachers are not providing modern education merely by blind imitation of modern practices. It is essential to modern education that teachers have sound educational purposes which their practices are designed to achieve. Teachers can be encouraged, through staff meetings and otherwise, to become familiar with the best thinking as to purposes to be achieved by their educational efforts. Such material as *The Purposes of Education in a Democracy*,[13] *Education for a Free Society*,[14] *Design for Elementary Education*,[15] *Education in the Elementary School*,[16] and *Education and Economic Well-Being in American Democracy*[17] will prove helpful. The consideration of such purposes as these will make it possible for a staff to select worthwhile goals

[13] Education Policies Commission, *The Purposes of Education in a Democracy*, *op. cit.*

[14] Report of the International Education Assembly, *Education for a Free Society*. New York: *The School Executive*, 1944.

[15] DeBoer, John J., and Strickland, Ruth G., *Design for Elementary Education*. New York: Hinds, Hayden, and Eldredge, Inc., 1945.

[16] Caswell, *op. cit.*

[17] Educational Policies Commission, *Education and Economic Well-Being in American Democracy*. Washington: The National Education Association and the American Association of School Administrators, 1940.

for its own efforts in the improvement of its educational job.

By an interest in the objectives of junior and senior high schools locally and on a broader basis, the principal can assure a broad conception of the purposes for his school so that with little modification, except for that of level, the statement of goals will apply to other units of the school system. The staff should see as its primary responsibility the development and continuous improvement of their educational purposes. These purposes must take into account the nature of the child, the relationship of the individual to society, the organization of education, the nature of learning, and curriculum development.

Such an approach would overcome the tendency of some teachers to be so concerned with particular grades or subjects that they lose sight of the broader goals of the school. This limited view frequently leads to the teacher's pulling the child in several directions, with the result that he becomes confused and thus cannot achieve an integrated personality. Though each level and subject has its own unique goals, all of these separate goals must be part of an overall framework if they are to be fully effective.

PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM. There is little doubt that the inclusion of public education in the subject matter taught by a staff results in greater adaptability. Apparently some of the lag in educational adaptation can be taken up by informing pupils about public education and developing discussions concerning the advancement of public education. It is more than likely that a staff engaged in informing children of the purposes and practices of modern education will be strongly inclined to follow these purposes and practices in its own teaching. As yet there is a striking lack in the development of this topic in our public schools.

Much of the effort of school staffs to develop adaptable schools will be wasted if we do not have succeeding generations of children growing into adulthood and citizenship with a clear understanding of the stake in public education and the means for enhancing the effectiveness of the educational program. Just providing a fairly good education for children is not enough, for we have already seen children with a good educational background resist increased expenditures for education as adults.

Fewer teachers, by ratio, in the selected school include information about education in their teaching than in even the least adaptable schools studied by Buley. This may mean that insufficient thought has been given to the importance of this sort of instruction in that school. The principal can well afford to give consideration to the desirability of this type of information and to the development of a program for getting best results from such instruction.

RELATION TO LAY UNDERSTANDING. Pierce found that, as between teachers in the schools measured highest on adaptability instruments and those measured lowest, little difference existed in the level of understanding of what schools can do. On the other hand, in comparing teacher understanding of nine issues in five schools ranked high in adaptability and five schools of low adaptability, Flaherty[18] found that the depth of understanding tended to be superior in the case of teachers in the high-adaptability schools. Pierce[19] qualifies his observation when he writes:

[18] Flaherty, William H., *Community Patterns of Educational Understanding.* New York: unpublished Ed.D. project, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1947.

[19] Pierce, Truman M., *Controllable Community Characteristics Related to the Quality of Education.* New York: The Metropolitan School Study Council, 1947.

No one would question the importance of staff understanding as a very powerful conditioner of the quality of education. Apparently the real test of the expression of staff understanding of what schools can do through the actual school program is highly related to what parents and other laymen believe schools should do.

This indicates that it is not enough for the principal to raise the level of understanding of the meaning of good schools on the part of the staff alone, important though this is. He must also work with the staff to raise community expectancy, so that parents and laymen not only approve of the steps already taken by the staff but are ready for next steps aimed at improvement of the educational program.

Experimental Teachers

In their Pennsylvania study Mort and Cornell[20] discovered that the degree of teacher experimentation is definitely related to the adaptability of the school. They found that in the least adaptable schools many teachers reported no experiments or listed very insignificant changes, indicating no depth of planning on the part of the teacher himself. By comparison, in the better schools a higher percentage of teachers listed experimentation, and far more of these experiments were of the type in which circumstances of instruction were consciously altered.

Extremes found in the study showed one community with only 14 per cent of the teachers listing any change, while at the opposite extreme 88 per cent of the teachers noted changes in their work. In response to the question, "Have you recently undertaken any experiments or made any changes in your work?" 82.5 per cent of the teachers in the selected school list none. This approaches the lower end of the

[20] Mort and Cornell, *American Schools in Transition, op. cit.*

amount of experimentation reported by staffs in the schools of Pennsylvania.

Here we see the need for strenuous efforts on the part of the principal to encourage each teacher to try out his own ideas. Some teachers may already have good ideas but may be too timid, or may feel these ideas too unimportant, to put them into actual operation. By showing an earnest interest in these ideas for change and by lending a helping hand when needed, the principal can give many of these teachers the confidence they need.

Teachers Assume Leadership

Teachers who feel that their role involves the exercise of initiative and participation in the modification of the educational policies of the school comprise the more adaptable staffs. Evidently the nurturing of initiative on the part of staff members is a contributing factor to making a school more adaptable.

There is still too little use of teachers in the determination of school policy. There has been a swing toward the inclusion of teachers on curriculum committees, examining boards for acquiring new personnel, guidance committees, and others. Yet there is still a strong tendency for these teachers to take their cues from the members of the committee who are in administrative positions, especially if the teacher hopes for advancement within the system. This is not mentioned to imply that such teachers are muzzled but only that they are cautious about pushing their own ideas, especially in the face of opposition. It will take time for them to learn how to assume positions of leadership.

The ratio of teachers participating in school policy is decidedly low in the selected school. The use of a Teachers Council for the consideration of local school matters pro-

vides one outlet for teacher participation in the planning and sharing of responsibility. Other outlets must be provided by the principal to secure a broader participation on this score. When teachers realize that something more is desired than merely a rubber stamp on the principal's ideas, perhaps they will come forth with the sort of significant contributions that will produce a more adaptable school.

Teacher Load

Schools in which teachers have smaller numbers of pupils in their classes tend to be the most adaptable. It seems reasonable to expect that overloaded teachers will feel that they have neither the time nor the energy to conceive and carry out changes in their classroom work. From his study of class size and its relation to adaptability, Newell[21] draws the following inferences:

1. It is highly probable that a relationship exists between the invention - early-introduction period and class size.
2. We may accept as an established fact that a relationship exists between the early-introduction - early-diffusion stage and class size.
3. It is highly probable that a relationship exists between late diffusion and class size.

This should leave little doubt that, along with other conditioners, small classes tend to improve educational adaptability.

The class average, as is true in most city schools, runs above 35 per teacher in the selected school. Avoiding too many classes with more than one grade in any one class and demonstrating the need for fewer pupils per class, especially in the lower primary grades, will help. The largest stumbling block to the reduction of teacher load is the need for greater finan-

[21] Newell, Clarence A., *Class Size and Adaptability*. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1943.

cial aid. Until this aid is forthcoming, teachers might experiment with ways of adapting that lend themselves to larger classes. Newell intimates that some adaptations do not depend upon class size and that there are certain adaptations which prosper best with large classes.

Resistance to Adaptability

Frequently a teacher will signify a desire to improve his practices if only the principal or parents or community would not stand in the way. Some of this impediment is real and some imagined. Whatever the reason for this resistance, a great deal of the lag in our educational processes is traceable to this factor.

Teachers consider that resistance to change stems from financial and other causes. Some have experienced parent or community resistance. Where a staff understands the financial limitations or resistances conditioning a school or school system, it is in better position to further educational adaptability.

Parent and community resistance to change can be very real in some communities. Where it is marked and widespread it serves to inhibit adaptability. Where it does not reach a reactionary stage, such opposition as expressed in the form of questioning and evaluation gives evidence that educational growth and progress are stimulated and thus favors adaptability.

Though the percentage of teachers in the selected school who considered that resistance to change stemmed from financial considerations was lower than in even the least adaptable schools investigated by Buley, this ratio was more than double that of teachers who named reasons other than financial as the cause. This is a healthy sign for, possibly, those teachers who are giving thought to this matter are more inclined to

put the responsibility for resistance to change where it belongs—on financial factors in the community instead of advancing a great number of excuses for retaining traditional practices.

Personality Problems

There is ample evidence that personality problems have their effect upon the adaptability of a school. The attitude of the teacher is an important ingredient in the total process of improving education and requires that the principal be a student of the personalities of his staff. Teachers who may on the surface appear disinterested, lethargic, and resistant to innovation can often be helped by a change in the conditions which produce these reactions. More attention is being given to this factor in the training of administrators, for its importance is now recognized.

If the principal is truly interested in making his school more adaptable, he will see as one of his tasks that of human engineering. He will not take teacher attitudes for granted and hope they will change for the better of themselves. He will try to understand what causes teachers to react in certain stereotypes, and will then begin the process of changing the environments of teachers to produce for them a more stimulating medium in which to work.

COMMUNITY-STAFF RELATIONSHIPS

There are certain relationships which members of a staff bear to the school community in which they function that should be examined for implications to adaptability.

Symbiotic Groups and Staff

The correlation between adaptability and staff affiliations with non-educational organizations in a community varies

with the extent of participation of the staff in such organizations. Adaptability is increased when there is membership in but one organization by any one teacher. When teachers belong to three or more organizations, the impetus to adaptability for the school tends to diminish.

A higher proportion of teachers in the selected school are affiliated with one or two noneducational organizations than in the most adaptable schools studied by Buley. This staff, however, appears to have too many teachers in the joiner classification, for one eighth of the teachers belong to four or more organizations. Perhaps these teachers should be encouraged to limit their activities to only one or two of these organizations for, apparently, this number of affiliations causes the teacher to do in or for or through the organization those things which promote adaptability. This matter will be discussed further in Chapter IX.

Inbreeding

Both the studies of Mort and Cornell and of Buley point out that there is a greater degree of inbreeding in poorer communities. The greater the number of teachers who were not previously associated with the immediate area of the school district in which they are now teaching, the greater the adaptability. Inbreeding, or the use of local people as teachers in the school system, seems to have a retarding effect upon adaptability.

If this is the case, then there are too many teachers on the staff of the selected school who lived too close to the school before employment. It would be wise to recommend that the personnel department put teachers in schools outside of the districts in which they live, and that it also employ a greater percentage of out-of-state teachers in the school system as a whole.

Property Ownership

Though the relationship between property ownership and adaptability is not conclusive, ownership of property by teachers would make for the sort of stability, community responsiveness, and realization of more effective outcomes which make for greater adaptability. It is probable that the inclusion of a larger proportion of men on elementary-school staffs, together with a higher percentage of married teachers and longer periods of tenure, all of which favor adaptability, would tend toward more property ownership.

This factor is well cared for by the staff of the selected school, in that a higher percentage of the staff owns property than was found by Buley among teachers of the most adaptable schools.

Residence

Buley[22] found a negative relationship between adaptability and the per cent of the staff whose residence is within two miles of the school in which they teach. Forty-five per cent of the selected school staff live within two miles of the school. Though high, this is below the ratios found by Buley in even the most adaptable schools. This characteristic by itself, then, should not be a retarding factor in producing greater adaptability in the selected school.

The effect of too many teachers living within a small radius of the school in which they teach is that of provincialism, for the community exerts more influence on the educational attitudes and outlook of teachers working in it than even the teacher-training institutions where they were educated. If we wish teachers to get the necessary broad outlook and multiple stimulation to produce an attitude that welcomes

[22] Buley, *op. cit.*

change, it is advisable to have the staff well scattered as to residence. The principal should actively campaign against board regulations that require residence of all teachers within the city.

TEACHERS DEVELOP PUPIL INFLUENCE ON ADAPTABILITY

Though education is for and through the pupils, all findings to date seem to indicate that pupils are relatively uninformed and intellectually inactive concerning educational matters. It seems strange that as educators we have consistently overlooked the importance of informing pupils on educational needs and issues. The schools have been guilty of producing citizens who know very little about the goals and purposes of education.

Why mention the part of pupils when as yet there is so little connection indicated between them and adaptability? It is because: 1. studies are under way to discover the relationship of pupil background and understanding to the quality of schools, and 2. so little has been done to develop this latent resource, that educators are not in a position at this time to assess its value adequately. Here is another potential area in which teachers might experiment—bringing educational problems and issues before the older pupils for discussion and judgment, then evaluating the effect of such activity upon the quality of the school. We may find this matter one of vital concern in developing a more adaptable school. Local initiative is predicated upon the participation of all who are affected by the educational program which includes, besides the professional staff, the parents and the public as well as the pupils.

Some experimentation has been attempted with this source of potential influence on adaptability in the selected school, by forming a council made up of the presidents of classes in

grades four through eight. This council has as its major concern the consideration of how its school can be made better. Problems of general education, administration, curriculum, and organization have been discussed, occasionally with surprising insight on the part of these children. These pupils have begun to make intelligently critical comment concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the school, with the aim of improving the school. To the extent that this type of activity can be followed up by a large majority of the teachers giving regular consideration in their plans to such matters, greater contributions to adaptability will probably result from pupil efforts.

STEPS IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF AN ADAPTABLE SCHOOL STAFF

1. The principal will avoid school regulations that might stifle the initiative of staff members. He will seek out and strengthen the positive forces of the individual teacher.
2. Ideas of teachers will be sought and encouraged, every effort being made by the principal to nurture the new and untried as it is put into practice by the individual members of the staff.
3. The principal will use the workshop technique to elevate the teaching act. Central office personnel and, on occasion, qualified experts from outside the school system will be called in to assist the staff in locating and in solving its problems.
4. The principal will initiate a stimulating program of professional staff improvement by focusing recurring attention upon the changing needs of children and society and upon the consideration of possible means for meeting these needs.

5. The principal must be ready to place the results of his study and experience at the service of the teacher who takes the initiative to go beyond routine procedures in the development of pupils.

6. Adaptability as a goal for the school can aid the principal in his in-service education program with the staff. Too often in the past there has been emphasis on the criticism of negative tendencies or shortcomings of the teachers. Frequently this approach leads to resentments which grow into antagonisms, and little real improvement is made. An in-service program aimed at discovering how to make the school more adaptable, and more meaningful in the lives of the boys and girls attending it, would supply teachers with the sort of inspiration that makes for progress and improvement all along the line. This approach is designed to challenge and capture the interest and creative ability of teachers.

7. The principal can help teachers to realize extra values from their extension courses by: a) discussing the content of a course with the teacher concerned; b) having the teacher who is taking a course make a report at a staff meeting; c) posting items of interest to teachers taking courses on the bulletin board; d) encouraging teachers to experiment in their own classrooms with the theories under study to learn the effect on teaching practice.

8. The principal will arrange to provide periodic visits to other classes for each teacher. At first this may be done within the school, then within the schools of the city, then more broadly. Each teacher is asked to bring back as many new ideas as he can find. After these ideas have been evaluated with the help of the principal and other staff members, those showing most promise will be tried out by the teacher. Exchange of teachers with distant school sys-

tems and even foreign countries for broadening purposes should be attempted again, now that the war is past.

9. The principal will encourage a local exchange of ideas by continuing to get from teachers statements of best practices in use and, possibly, good practices which individual teachers may like to try, as a means of causing teachers to be conscious of needs and the resources at hand to meet them.

10. There would probably be some value for the adaptability of the school if the principal encouraged teachers who have ideas for change and the desire to try them out to seek transfer to his school. There are probably some schools in the system where such freedom to experiment by staff members is discouraged, and this valuable asset should not be lost to the system. At the same time teachers with the inclination to continue teaching in the same old way could be encouraged to seek transfer to a school with a more conservative viewpoint. The transfer policy of the system should facilitate this type of movement, for undoubtedly both types of teachers would feel happier and be more effective if put into the new situation.

11. The principal will do what is in his power to increase the competence of the staff through the assimilation and development of a well-rounded corps of teachers that will function as a team in producing a more adaptable school. To accomplish this the staff must be high in the qualities found by recent studies to favor adaptability. This end can be achieved by making changes that can be effected in the present staff and by adding teachers with desirable characteristics, who fit into the total existing staff pattern, as vacancies occur. Such action will result in a well-integrated staff which recognizes the value of staff patterns that successfully use the assets and abilities of all to produce the most efficient functioning of the staff as a unit.

Those factors which can be developed in the present staff of any school include: a) retaining about two thirds of the staff in the school system for a period of from 8 to 30 years; b) encouraging travel in distant places, including foreign travel; c) an interest in books as indicated by a personal library of not less than 300 volumes, 150 of them non-professional books, and the acquisition of more at the rate of about twelve per three-year period; d) six hours of professional training every five years, or in a range of once in four years to once in nine years; e) frequent attendance at concerts, operas, and plays; f) the purchase and reading of professional periodicals; g) stimulation of wide reading; h) retention of a good proportion of mature teachers.

Those factors which could be accounted for most easily when vacancies occurred and replacements became necessary include: a) teacher originally from outside of the state (up to one half of the staff); b) undergraduate courses in three different areas of study; c) training in institutions not already represented on the staff in order to provide greater variety of backgrounds; d) training for a profession other than teaching by an occasional teacher; e) some leadership recognition while in college; f) more men teachers to a minimum of 10 per cent of the staff; g) teaching experience of more than 6 years; h) receptiveness to change; i) teachers with ideas for change; j) teachers not living in the school district.

Those conditioners of a staff which could be made effective both through improvement of the present staff and through wise selection of future staff members include: a) a minimum of five years of training beyond high school; b) travel experience, especially single trips exceeding 500 miles from home and including foreign travel; c) a high percentage of teachers in the 36- to 60-year age group; d)

educational training up to 40 hours; e) courses in a variety of areas, to provide a background of at least three different fields and including 95 per cent of the staff; f) followership based on participation; g) encouragement of creative teachers; h) stimulation of individual thinking and action; i) understanding of the power of education; j) inclusion of the study of education in the curriculum; k) more home ownership by staff; l) staff members active in one or two community organizations; m) resources used as the source of ideas as broad as life itself to provide a maximum of freedom to think and act; n) awareness through participation in the development of school policy of the financial, professional, and community resistances to adaptability in the school.

VII The Central Office Staff

Since the principal is part of a city-wide school system, it is inevitable that his efforts will be affected by the central office staff. How can the relationship of the principal with members of the central office staff be improved, with the goal of aiding the principal in making his school more adaptable?

INITIATOR IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Mort and Cornell[1] point to the importance of the work of the superintendent of schools when they write, "In their awareness of current needs, administrative officers as a group stand above teachers and far above school board members and members of the public at large." The superintendent who sees as his unique function the initiation of desirable practices in the school system as the needs for these practices develop is of paramount value to his school system. The principal of a school in the system can rightfully look to the superintendent for the interpretation of the broad social forces operat-

[1] Mort and Cornell, *American Schools in Transition, op. cit.*

ing on the children in the city and the means that can be used to best prepare the children in the schools to be successful in their society.

It is important that the cities, with their vast resources of wealth and trained personnel, should again step into the forefront of educational experimentation. The superintendent can do his part by introducing adaptations during the slow introductory period, when so many hesitate because of the lack of complete assurance. The fifteen-year introductory period found by Mort and Cornell[2] could be shortened if superintendents in large cities would throw their resources into the task of diffusing innovations more rapidly. The principal can take an active part by aiding the diffusion into his school of innovations initiated by the superintendent.

Professional Leader

Investigation shows that 90 per cent of past adaptations have been made with the superintendent as the leader, supporter, or follower. In over half of the cases he stood out as the leader of the adaptation. Thus the good superintendent will increasingly show the way to better schools through his contact with his principals. The superintendent should continue to lead in suggesting areas for research in the school system. The actual job should be turned over to individual principals, to be carried out in the manner which each finds best in the light of his local situation.

It is highly important to adaptability that the superintendent maintain his leadership through its quality rather than because of the educational hierarchy involved. The superintendent who, as a student of education, continues to point the way to the possibilities for doing an increasingly better

[2] *Ibid.*

job in the schools will not want for the proper loyalty and cooperation from his principals.

Improve Teaching

As in the case of the principal, the superintendent, too, must be on the alert for the teacher with the rare idea that has creative possibilities. Such teachers must be encouraged and rewarded if their initiative is not to be lost. These original ideas will be forthcoming only if the superintendent allows irregularities in practices and encourages the creative minds among his professional staff. This attitude gives the cue to one of the most important devices by which the superintendent can promote adaptability within his school system and can contribute most to the benefits accruing to local initiative. It may well be applied by the superintendent not only to teachers but to principals as well.

The principal can cooperate with the superintendent by indicating to the central office those teachers in his school who are creative and who go above and beyond the ordinary requirements of teaching by experimenting with better procedures. Teachers whose outstanding work receives recognition not only from the building principal but also from the head of the school system will have a tremendous impetus to continue their good work. The mere fact that teachers know that experimentation is sought rather than disapproved will encourage them along this line.

This does not imply that thoughtless acts on the part of the teacher, merely to prove that he is different, are to be encouraged. Teachers should have a valid reason for each of the changes they make. However, they should not be required to prove conclusively the advantages of their changes, at least in the beginning stages, for many new ideas have a degree of the nebulous about them at their inception. Few changes spring

full-blown in the minds of their creators. If the heads of the school system are rich in suggestion and this is followed up by continuous efforts at interpretation by principal and staff in terms of the unique conditions found in the individual school community, great stimulation of thought and effort for the teachers in each school will result.

To obtain the most from a corps of teachers, the superintendent should initiate a personnel policy which will assure a goodly number of master teachers—those who rank high in background of training, are alert to needs, and have creative potentialities. These teachers have a marked influence on adaptability even though their number may not be great. We still need instruments for detecting the characteristics of the master teacher in as yet untried teachers. A personnel department that can reach out and unerringly select this type when it is available is invaluable in making possible an adaptable school system.

The good superintendent will be able to detect and encourage the principals who have gone beyond basic requirements and are building more adaptable schools. This process of recognizing important developments in the individual schools can be speeded up if each principal will keep the superintendent informed of adaptations being developed in his own school and, perhaps, will discuss ways and means by which the central office staff can facilitate the realization of the adaptation under experimentation. In addition, the principal must be alert to accept and use the inventions of others when these are brought to his attention by the central office staff.

Introducer of Adaptations

Too great emphasis upon the spread of a few desirable practices will materially curtail the time available to the su-

perintendent for the initiation of additional adaptations. This produces a plateau in progress well below the potential level of the school system. The march of progress marks time while the gains already won are consolidated.

The task of consolidation of gains or of bringing the individual schools up to a desirable level can be the chief concern of the assistant superintendents, with the cooperation of the building principals and the supervisory staff. Thus the superintendent is freed to a greater extent for devising next steps in the improvement of the school system.

To aid the diffusion of desirable practices, each assistant superintendent of one city system meets regularly with the principals of the schools which are his responsibility. An observation period is arranged in the school acting as host for the meeting, in order that the principals may gain first-hand knowledge of how that school meets the particular problem which is the subject of the day's meeting. The principals then gather in a meeting room and discuss the various aspects of the problem, including comments on their observation in the host school.

The superintendent might also encourage three or four principals to meet in each other's schools for more detailed consideration of their mutual problems. The combination of study, discussion, and observation would do much to advance the thinking of all principals concerned. This procedure, together with the previously mentioned plan, would do much to aid in the diffusion of adaptations.

Frequently there comes the temptation in a large city school system to blueprint an adaptation in order to secure more rapid diffusion. While this procedure has some advantages, it produces an inflexibility which prevents the staff of a particular school community from realizing all of the potential good of an innovation. If the building principals are alert

to capitalize on the leadership provided by the superintendent, there will be little need for regulation concerning the best means of utilizing a particular adaptation in a particular school.

The superintendent in the large city can surround himself with supervisory services with a relatively small expenditure of the total budget. If these supervisors function in an inspectorial frame of reference, they become a retarding influence on adaptability. It is essential that supervisors seek out and encourage initiative and contribute to the diffusion of good practices, if they are to contribute to adaptability in any substantial way.

The principal can, in part, determine the effect of these supervisory services on his school. If he will glean from each supervisor the best that can be offered in that field, and then integrate these advanced ideas into the educational program of his school, greater adaptability should result. In addition, the principal can use these experts as sounding boards for his own ideas with the effect of sloughing off outmoded practices and contentions, refining thinking on the issues involved, and gaining the support of these supervisors on programs of improvement in his school.

INFLUENCE ON COMMUNITY

There are many ways in which the superintendent and central office staff of a city school system condition the work of the local school. It is important that this influence operate in the direction of facilitating the efforts of the principal in making his school more adaptable.

Community Supporters

Sooner or later the superintendent must look to the public and the teaching body for support of his policies. He will gain

support more readily by seeking the help of teachers and lay public in the development of policies. The administrator who seeks the cooperation of his professional staff and laymen in the community is taking an important step in assuring a more adaptable school system.

This does not mean that the superintendent must limit himself to whatever level of understanding he happens to find in his city. Means were discussed in Chapter V whereby the principal, through his community council or through conferences held to study unmet needs, uses the services of these laymen to plan progress for the school. If principals in the school system, generally, used this plan, the superintendent would be enabled to keep his finger on the pulse of the city through its various areas. In turn, through the principals the local community councils could take back to the people the fruits of the superintendent's best thinking on educational matters. In time the superintendent would be in a position to educate this lay group, and through them large numbers of other influential people in the city, to desire more from their schools than is the case at present.

At times the superintendent may wish additional help for a specific project. He can seek out leaders in the city who are decidedly favorable to the adaptation, and can utilize their help in fostering a favorable climate of opinion for the change. Such small groups of laymen, providing they are leaders in the community, can exert influence out of all proportion to their number.

The principal can again contribute his share by indicating to the superintendent those individuals or groups in his school community who are favorable to the particular adaptation contemplated. If the community council is truly representative of the citizens in the school community, and if the principal has laid the groundwork for an understanding of ed-

ucation, the various school-community councils are in position to act on innovations initiated by the superintendent as well as those locally conceived.

Symbiotic Groups

In his study of symbiotic groups, Gallagher[3] observes:

Since the most powerful relationships between symbiotic groups and adaptability were found when groups were connected on a community-wide basis, the work with symbiotic groups should be developed with due consideration to the community-wide implications of the undertaking. Or, to put it another way: while the relations of symbiotic groups to adaptability will be most in evidence by what takes place on the local school level, the greatest values will doubtless accrue in that condition where what the local school does is part of a well integrated plan.

This suggests another area of interest and action for members of the central office staff who are interested in promoting better schools.

The principal should join with his local high-school centered area (as described in Chapter VIII) to broaden the contacts of his staff and parents. Locally connected groups such as the P.T.A., forum groups, and the like should be encouraged to meet with other school groups of a similar type in other school communities for the broadening effect such contacts can have.

The superintendent or assistant superintendent can arrange or instigate city-wide gatherings of such groups, which usually meet in a local school setting, in order to promote adaptability throughout the schools of the city. Begg[4] and

[3] Gallagher, Ralph P., *Some Relationships of Symbiotic Groups to Adaptability in Public Schools and to Other Related Factors.* New York: unpublished Ed.D. project, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1947.

[4] Begg, William R., *Techniques for Study Groups Concerned with Unmet Needs.* New York: The Metropolitan School Study Council, 1947.

Beach[5] have described in some detail how to initiate, organize, and get the maximum return from citizens' groups concerned with public education.

The central office can lend assistance to principals by identifying groups whose cultivation will yield greatest value. The central office is sometimes in position to encourage groups to seek out educational personnel for membership in their organizations. It would be most helpful to the principal if a member of the central office staff, preferably an assistant superintendent, were designated to be in charge of public relations, which would include working with these symbiotic groups throughout the city. Such individual would be in position to work with the local principal to get the most out of the groups centered in that school community.

Since symbiotic groups showing consequential interest are not limited to a school's attendance area, there is need for city-wide help to the local principal in the form of: 1. identifying the most interested and most helpful groups in the city, 2. developing the means for making staff connections significant for adaptability, and 3. organizing these groups behind education in a manner to promote adaptability. This type of cooperation from the central office would be of material assistance to the staff of an individual school by identifying interested and helpful symbiotic groups in that community and by encouraging members of this staff to connect themselves with such groups.

[5] Committee of 14, Metropolitan School Study Council, *Public Action for Powerful Schools*. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1949.

TECHNIQUES OF LEADERSHIP

There are helpful techniques which can be employed by the head of a city school system which facilitate the work of a local principal eager to adapt his school to the needs of its pupils. The alert superintendent uses a great variety of these techniques as a good insurance that his school system will not mark time while the world moves on.

Use of University Consultants

The superintendent interested in keeping continually abreast of the times and of the changing needs of children and society will use every aid in accomplishing this purpose. More and more superintendents are developing close ties with one or more universities of good repute in educational leadership. Through these ties the superintendent is kept continually aware of the best thought of frontier thinkers in education, while the university benefits by the laboratory development and widespread use of these concepts under conditions of actual practice.

The use of these consultants will be stimulating to the principal in the local school and will help him to keep on his toes educationally. These consultants will provide additional sources of aid to the principal who is desirous of keeping abreast of educational developments to insure that good practices will be introduced in his school.

It is increasingly recommended in professional literature that a working philosophy of education be developed as the first essential to having a modern school system. This should be initiated by the superintendent with the help of his staff and the aid of university consultants. Once a defensible philosophy has been adopted, the superintendent can use ad-

ditional help from the university by having spot checks made on specific practices through the use of competent graduate students in conjunction with various members of the system's staff.

The principal has a specific responsibility in this. His understanding of the philosophy of education should be such that he can appreciate the implications in educational practices of applying the philosophy developed through the superintendent's leadership. In this way the individual school will not be out of tune with the great purposes of education going forward in the city. Also, the principal, through the in-service program he adopts as described in Chapter V, will have his school on the forward edge of progress in the city and can participate with the university representatives in further analyzing needs and helpful adaptations.

Another practical use of university personnel is in the making of occasional surveys of the school system which will throw strong and weak spots into relief for future attention and will serve to precipitate community action to catch up on accepted adaptations. Whenever acceptance of innovations in the educational program of the city lags, the superintendent can call on one or more universities to put their sanction on this new trend, thus winning additional support for its inception and continuance.

Avoids Retardations to Adaptability

In their attempts to develop and retain a modern school system, members of the central office staff will often find it necessary to withhold judgment and avoid decisions concerning an adaptation until such adaptation has been given time to prove itself good or inadequate. This is an important key to the development of adaptable schools. As every superintendent, assistant superintendent, and supervisor well knows,

no one educator can hope to have all of the good ideas in education that are possible. This is one reason for having a large central office staff with a variety of experts along various lines. In turn the building principal must be the expert for his school community. It is the duty of all of these individuals to keep the superintendent informed by conferring with him as frequently as necessary, to insure that he is in possession of all pertinent data before even a tentative decision is reached. In this way most negative decisions can be avoided.

There is a great temptation for the superintendent to make decisions that are aimed at bringing along a laggard school. Unfortunately such decisions sometimes stifle the creative efforts of those schools on the growing edge. Where feasible, it is usually better for the assistant superintendent to develop ways and means for improving the lagging school, than to risk a city-wide edict that might have a negative effect on the schools which are producing results. The principal and staff should of course cooperate toward this end.

A new adaptation does not always stand up against traditional practices in its beginning stages. Sometimes minor revisions are needed to realize the full values from a change. Interference or even disinterest by the superintendent at this point would tend to cause teachers to drop their efforts and slide back into the groove well worn by tradition.

The large city has put too much stress on inspection to insure that central office directives are being carried out. Inspection was more necessary when teachers were largely untrained and when principals were chosen from the ranks with little or no special training in administration and supervision. The situation has improved markedly in this regard, making central-office inspection unnecessary if not a distinct deterrent to experimentation. Central office staff members must increasingly see their role as that of exerting their influence to keep

schools in the system adapted to new needs. Because of the increasingly higher level of training all along the line in city school systems, it is fair to assume that by comparison the city educational program should be superior to that of smaller communities which do not have the services of so many well-prepared educators.

As the organization in large city school systems provides the necessary channels for diffusing new adaptations, central office personnel will find it increasingly important not only to seek out and then diffuse valuable practices found in the system, but also to do nothing to impede the inception and development of new practices. Unless this latter is done, it will not be long before there will be a complete lack of new practices.

STEPS BY WHICH THE PRINCIPAL CAN FURTHER CENTRAL OFFICE AID TO PRODUCE A MORE ADAPTABLE SCHOOL

1. The principal should understand the philosophy of education developed for the system through the leadership of the superintendent. He and the staff should realize and experiment with the implications of such philosophy.
2. The principal should acquire the quality of training and employ the type of initiative that will warrant the superintendent's giving him increasing responsibility in the operation of his school, thus freeing the superintendent for more creative endeavors.
3. The principal will do what he can to persuade the central office staff to function for the city school system in much the same manner as that in which the best state departments of education function for the schools of the state, as another means of aiding the development of adaptable schools. Most important is the exercise of autonomous action by local schools in the system. The work at the city-

wide level is very good. Little more could be squeezed out at this level with what we now know about education. What is needed is development at the local level. The central office can make its largest contribution at this point by encouraging and stimulating the local principal to do the quality of educational job which it is possible and imperative that he do.

4. The principal will indicate his ability to use wisely the functional responsibility delegated by the superintendent, through leadership in operating an adaptable school and through proper coordination with the schools of the city.
5. The principal should take an active part by aiding the diffusion of innovations, initiated by the superintendent, in his school.
6. The task of diffusing worth-while adaptations should be done so well by the principal that the superintendent will find it unnecessary to devote his time to this phase of creating more adaptable schools. He will thus be able to concentrate on the introduction of new adaptations to meet newly rising needs in the city.
7. The principal will assist the superintendent to bring the school system into the forefront of educational experimentation by doing his part in developing more adaptations in his own school.
8. The principal will call to the attention of the superintendent the work of creative teachers in his school, so that such teachers may be encouraged to continue their recognition of the need for change and their invention of means for adapting to such change.
9. The principal will indicate to the superintendent the outstanding citizens in the school community to be enlisted by the superintendent in raising the level of understanding on educational matters in the city. Through the local commu-

nity council this type of information will then be spread through the local community.

10. The principal will place his knowledge of his school district, plus the understanding of community problems by representative citizens, at the disposal of the superintendent when the latter is in need of local information from many school communities in order to secure the basic information for some city-wide educational development.

11. The principal will secure the assistance of consultants and graduate students from universities, brought in by the central administration, to evaluate the practices used in the school, to discover needs in the community, and to devise adaptations to meet these needs.

12. The principal should have the privilege of looking to the central-office staff for those activities which are most conducive to adaptability, such as supplying needed materials and identifying symbiotic groups with which local schools could profitably develop contacts.

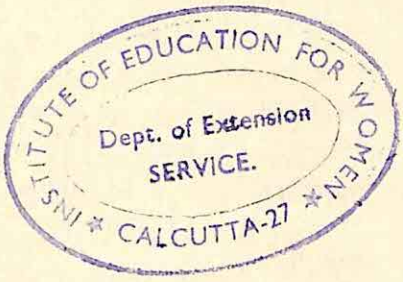
13. The principal will point out to central office personnel those factors in the system operating to retard adaptability in his school, and will attempt to interest these individuals in taking the necessary steps to offset such disadvantages.

14. The principal will take the initiative in utilizing the specialized knowledge possessed by supervisory personnel in the central office to further adaptations in his school. Failure to do this leads to the desire of these individuals to superimpose pieces of special adjustments upon the educational program of the school, with little regard for the unique problems of the school.

15. The principal will make adaptations promptly to avoid regulation on these practices from the central office. Such regulation, though it may help in diffusing certain patterns, will eventually produce an inflexibility that retards further

adaptations. The principal will keep the superintendent informed of any city-wide regulation that impedes adaptability in his school, so that such regulation may be moderated or eliminated.

16. The principal will inform the superintendent of areas in which changes are needed in order to receive the benefit of that educator's insight and knowledge. The principal will also indicate the results of his, the teachers', and the community council's thinking on these changes, so that the superintendent can inject any new angles not previously considered.


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VIII The School Community

The advent of research in education brought a complexity to this field that has caused the large mass of laymen to feel unable to understand and keep abreast of new developments in the education of children. Educators, not realizing the harm in this trend, often contribute to this lack of understanding of educational matters on the part of the citizens in the community. The larger, more impersonal city school has contributed its share to the trend. Now we realize that unless we keep our communities with us it is impossible to make our schools as good as we know how to make them. How can community participation be increased in order to overcome this handicap to making a city elementary school more adaptable?

FACTORS RELATING TO ADAPTABILITY

Pierce[1] classifies community factors which are known or presumed to be related to the adaptability of schools into three categories: 1. good will toward education, 2. understanding of what schools can do, and 3. characteristics which

[1] Pierce, *op. cit.*

condition the expression of good will and understanding in the schools themselves. He found a correlation of .80 among these three community factors and adaptability, which means that 64 per cent of the variability in the adaptability of schools may be predicted from variation among communities in reference to these measures. No principal can afford to overlook the importance of these factors to the well-being of his school and the possibility of using this information to develop greater adaptability in his educational program.

It is now clear that there is a strong relationship between adaptability, or goodness of schools, and knowledge of the public in regard to the power of education. This is made clear in Pierce's study and by the results found by Mort and Cornell. It would be well worth the time of the principal to make a check of the citizens in his school community on their understanding of what schools can do by use of the Mort-Cornell-Hinton questionnaire,[2] because its use would permit comparison with the findings of Mort and Cornell in Pennsylvania and with Pierce's study. Hicks and Westby (previously mentioned) also used this questionnaire in their studies.

In most cities too little is being done to keep citizens abreast of developments in education, the more widespread function of education, and the possibility of increasing the power of education through the use of new discoveries and inventions. Too many people still interpret the meaning and use of education in terms of their own schooling, largely because so little has been done to keep them informed of progress in education. The principal can increase his contacts with the public and improve the ways of disseminating information with a variety of devices, as indicated in Chapter V, in order to raise community expectancy of what the schools should do.

[2] Mort, Paul R., Cornell, F. G., and Hinton, N. H., *op. cit.*

Public ignorance in educational matters is responsible for much of the difficulty which cities are experiencing in obtaining more adaptable schools. There is a definite connection between the number of citizens who have a good understanding of education and the adaptability of the schools in the community.

To ascertain community good will toward education, Pierce used: 1. the educational level of the community, 2. the occupational level of the community, 3. social factors which operate to broaden the public mind with reference to education. The three groups of factors in this category are each significantly related to adaptability. According to Pierce,[3] these good-will factors show a correlation of .69 with adaptability.

The principal should survey his school community to determine the number of eighth-grade graduates, the number of high-school and college graduates, the proportion of unskilled workers in comparison with the number of business and professional workers, the density of population, the number of foreign-born, the area of the district, and the school population, inasmuch as these factors are the indices of good will toward education in his community. The interest of high-school and college graduates should be enlisted in furthering the welfare of the school, both for the beneficial effect on the school and for whatever value this interest might have in the direction of retaining people of this type in the community.

Factors which condition the expression of good will and understanding of education are concerned with: 1. trends in community prosperity, 2. wealth and tax burden, and 3. universality of interest in schools and taxes. These measures, when combined, show the same correlation with adaptability as the first group of good-will factors. The most important

[3] Pierce, *op. cit.*

group in this category has been found to be wealth and tax burden.

These measures indicate the wisdom of watching population trends, school-enrollment trends, wealth trends, and trends in postal receipts as reflected by the school community. Wealth, school tax rate, total tax rate, ratio of assessed valuation to true value, adjusted total tax rate, and tax rate for debt service are important considerations. Attendance in nonpublic schools, population fifty years old and above, and extent of home ownership also must be considered. Attention to these areas and the study of ways of influencing these trends in the right direction represent new interests for most principals. Study could profitably be made of how the principal can affect these conditioners to the advantage of his school.

When Pierce[4] combined good-will factors and the conditioners of good will and understanding, he found a correlation of .78 with the quality of education. This should leave no doubt as to the desirability of effecting changes in the right direction among these factors. The utmost intelligence and ability of school people must operate to devise ways and means of effecting the preferred trends. That this is a difficult assignment for the principal is undeniable. Yet part of the problem has now been removed, for at least the principal understands the direction in which he needs to move.

In many communities the schools have everything to permit a modern educational program except the cooperation of the community in making it a reality. The quality of the teaching staff is all that could be desired, but a variety of pressures from various sources in the community hold them to a traditional concept of teaching. In such cases the principal and staff must educate the public to desire a more modern

[4] Pierce, *op. cit.*

education so that teachers may be freed to serve to the level of their highest potential.

USE OF COMMUNITY ADVANTAGES

It is valuable for the principal to understand those conditions within the community which are advantageous to adaptability. With this information in mind full use can be made of favorable factors already present, to gain full impetus from them in furthering the adaptability of the school. Among these demonstrated advantages, in addition to the factors already mentioned from Pierce's study, are size, clustering, leadership in the community, cultural level, economic status, and educational factors.

Westby[5] found that there is considerable variation in the social and economic configurations among self-contained suburban communities and among sub-areas in cities. In none of the sixteen communities he studied was the potential of community influence so inferior as to make it impossible that a fairly satisfactory school-community relationship might be established.

Size

Up to certain limits, size is a contributing factor to adaptability. Mort and Cornell[6] write, "This chapter (VI) gives positive evidence that within the range of communities up to 100,000 population, size is a contributing factor." The limiting factor in such large communities as a city school system is not size in itself but the fact that with large size the community factors usually go down. If the community factors al-

[5] Westby, *op. cit.*
[6] Mort and Cornell, *American Schools in Transition, op. cit.*

ready discussed in this chapter could be improved and the advantages of size maintained, the large city could be brought nearer to its potential for good education.

Because the selected school district has a population of about 12,600 it is somewhat small in itself to realize all of the advantages to be gained from size. At the same time the school system in which it is located, operating in a city of about 432,000, is too large to attain full benefit from size because of the retarding effect of community factors. For this reason it may be well for the principal of the selected school to work in close cooperation with the several neighboring districts, possibly centering around the high school in his own district. This will serve the end of creating a larger community somewhere near the 100,000 size. Several communities in New York City which are members of the Metropolitan School Study Council have already formed this type of coalition with profit to all schools included.

A cooperative arrangement with neighboring school districts would increase the number of above-average citizens who would be known in this larger community and could be used to lead the rest of the community to expect better education from their schools. This is important when it is remembered that it isn't the average level of the community that is significant but the number of residents high in social intelligence and responsibility who contribute most to the quality of the schools.

The selected school district has some spread in environmental factors which is a help to the school. On a six-point scale of environmental variations ranging from superior to inferior,[7] the selected school community has areas listed as

[7] Department of Reference and Research, *Social Trends and the Schools.* Newark: Department of Reference and Research, Board of Education, Newark, New Jersey, 1941.

good, fair, and poor; or second, third, and fourth on the scale. Combination with the school communities centering around the immediate high school would extend the areas in each of these levels on the scale and add a small area listed as very poor, or fifth on the scale. This condition would make for a greater clustering of elements that make up the cultural pattern.

Another advantage of this sort of cooperative pooling is the fact that size of district is an important point to be considered in the selection of those first few communities in which an adaptation is to be given its trial. The principals in the group of schools included in this larger community who wish to improve their schools will find it easier to do so if they combine their resources than if they try to function alone.

In any case, the principal should do what he can to cause his school to function as a cultural center of community life. This function, so common in schools of smaller communities, often disappears in the large city school because so little effort is made to develop the city school as the focal point of community life and thereby offset the loss to education that results from a lack of small community control. Opening the school for Boy and Girl Scout groups, P.T.A. activities, adult-education and recreation groups, more frequent school programs calling for community attendance, forums and discussion groups requiring community participation, and dramatic groups would represent first steps by the principal in giving the school back to the community.

Clustering

In their Pennsylvania study Mort and Cornell noted a factor favorable to adaptability which resulted when several schools in a relatively small area developed similar adaptations at about the same time. This spreading of adaptations

in a cluster of schools or communities seemed to give a greater permanence to the adaptations already made and encouraged the introduction and diffusion of further adaptations. To promote clustering as an aid to the adaptability of his school the principal needs to have: 1. professional contacts with other schools in the vicinity, and 2. channels by which to inform parents and laymen not only about what their own school is doing but also about what other schools are doing.

Contact with professional groups of all kinds will provide: 1. means for knowing what adaptations are being tried in neighboring schools, with the possibility of using those not now a part of a particular school, and 2. the opportunity of promoting the desire of other principals to try adaptations already under way in one of the schools represented by the group. Both lines of action will speed up the changes helpful to an individual school and will insure a longer life for the adaptations initiated there.

The potent influence of parents can be used advantageously in this respect. The principal can justify the changes he has initiated if he can point out to the citizens in his community that other schools are following the lead of their school. Parents in one school district, by communication with parents in other school districts, would encourage the use of adaptations begun in their schools and would hear from parents in other districts about changes they will want tried in their own school.

The only caution in the use of this force is the possibility of imitating only the outward evidences, without the proper depth of understanding to make the innovation genuine. It is important that the principal and his staff be adequately prepared by professional study to secure the utmost in value from an adaptation by the time its introduction is most propitious.

Community Leaders

Our study shows that a comparatively small number of unusually alert citizens may influence school policy out of all proportion to their number. By careful selection of citizens to engage in first line participation, education of the public can be made to count long before the great mass of the public is reached.

This observation by Mort and Cornell [8] indicates the importance of using the assets in the community, in the form of citizens who rank well above the average in education and ability, to influence their fellow men. The principal should know who these individuals are and then develop their interest in the welfare of the school as suggested in Chapter V.

Demographic Factors

In general, communities on a high cultural level are early adaptors, while those on a low cultural level show the most lag. Communities high in adaptability at the elementary level were also high in home ownership among the communities investigated by Westby. This apparently reflects the desirability of the community as a place to live, as does also the number of inhabitants fifty years of age and older. Communities high in the per cent of unskilled workers and low in the per cent of business and professional workers are generally low in their level of education and their understanding of good schools.

The selected district suffers in respect to home ownership, in that this area is only 15 per cent owner-occupied. Part of this is explained by the fact that there are few one-family and many multiple-dwelling units in the district. A program initiated by the school aimed at community improvement may enhance home ownership to some degree.

[8] Mort and Cornell, *American Schools in Transition, op. cit.*

Economic Status

Westby[9] used per capita wealth, per pupil expenditure, per cent of eighth-grade graduates, per cent of college graduates, and median grade attained by those twenty-five years of age and over to determine the economic status of communities. He found that the range in per capita wealth within the eight New York City communities and the eight independent communities he studied was more important for adaptability than the comparison of the two groups of communities.

This group of data is important in that it reveals that differences in expenditure for education are caused by the capacity of the community and the willingness of the people to support education. The higher the percentages of eighth-grade graduates and college graduates and the higher the median grade of those who are twenty-five years of age and over, the greater the willingness and ability to support education.

Of the adults whose children attend the selected school, almost 75 per cent have completed eighth grade or more. Only about one per cent are college graduates, although almost 8 per cent have had some college education. The median grade attained by those twenty-five years of age and over is the eighth. If this is representative of the public at large in the district, the factors are favorable except in the case of college graduates, where the principal must carefully nurture the influence exerted by this small group.

A per pupil expenditure of $290.00 per annum based on average daily attendance, or $260.20 based on average enrollment in 1947, favors adaptability according to the New York State study of per pupil expenditures for education.

[9] Westby, *op. cit.*

Ethnic Factors

In comparing New York City communities with independent communities, Westby[10] checked the ethnic factors by finding: 1. the number of groups which make up 0.5 per cent or more of the foreign-born population, 2. the number of groups with 5 per cent or more of foreign-born population, 3. which community had a larger percentage in the largest group of foreign-born nationals, and 4. the per cent of Negroes. Because the New York City communities had higher percentages of foreign-born and more people in the largest group of foreign-born, he estimates that it would be more difficult to establish desirable school-community relationships in the New York City communities.

The selected school district is not handicapped in this respect if the nationality of the parents of its pupils reflects the school community at large. Only 13.3 per cent of the adults are foreign-born, and of the foreign-born group the largest percentage of any one nationality is only 1.8.

Educational Status

The presence in the population of college graduates, high-school graduates, and eighth-grade graduates aids adaptability, Westby[11] finds. Even in the communities where the percentage of these graduates is low there is a large number of graduates who either have a fair understanding of what good schools can do or may readily be helped to achieve it.

McCormick[12] found in applying his poll, *What Do You Think?* that, of six factors checked, the age and educational level attained by a respondent are the most important determinants of his understanding of the educative process, and

[10] *Ibid.*
[11] *Ibid.*
[12] McCormick, *op. cit.*

that there is a continual increase in understanding with increased educational level.

Of the parents whose children attend the selected school one per cent are college graduates, about one fourth are high-school graduates or better, and about three fourths are eighth-grade graduates or better. If this picture is representative of the adults in the community, it should not prove very difficult for the principal to help citizens to a better understanding of modern education.

INFLUENCE OF THE COMMUNITY ON SCHOOL POLICIES

Every community has some influence upon its school. Some communities influence their schools but little, while others are part and parcel of the educational plan operating therein. It is significant that community influence tends to be high in those schools most successful in meeting the challenge of a changing world.

Lay Responsibility

Mort and Vincent[13] tell us that "good schools are not made by teachers or by school superintendents or by school boards—not by them alone—but are patterns of human behavior in which the behavior of parents and other citizens plays an extremely significant part." This emphasizes the point that schools are an institution provided by the public for the welfare of the public. For this reason the public cannot avoid taking a large share of the responsibility for the quality of its schools.

In spite of this fact, the usual role of parents, particularly in those communities having the least adaptable schools, has been that of neutrality and ignorance. Most parents know

[13] Mort and Vincent, *op. cit.*

little about what their schools are like, much less what they could and should be. Particularly in large cities, it is the lack of participation by the people in the direction of their school that does most to prevent the best quality of school possible. It is frequently the lay members of the community who are responsible for retaining formalism in the school program.

If these statements paint a true picture, what can be done to bring about necessary improvement? Certainly the responsibility lies with the public to bring its participation above the level of neutrality and to expect more from its schools than academic achievement alone. Yet the principal is unwise if he sits back with the idea that he is handicapped by public attitude. In the past, too much of the "hands off" attitude of the public has been fostered by school administrators, for it was thought to lead to less interference with the educational program. Now we realize that such an attitude is a handicap to achieving the kind of school we want, a school that meets the ever-developing and evolving needs of its boys and girls.

The principal must set about deliberately to dispel this old notion of the public toward its schools. He must take his community into partnership if progress of a significant nature is to be achieved. He must stimulate the imagination of his community, so that action in behalf of better education will ensue. He must make the public aware of the comprehensive changes that have occurred in American life and American education since the turn of the century, so that the lack of this knowledge will no longer serve as an obstacle to adaptability.

The problem of developing lay understanding and utilizing lay thinking on community and educational matters is met best by arranging lay participation in educational planning. By considering educational problems the lay citizen

grows in his knowledge of what constitutes the basic elements of good education, and this in turn provides him with the quality of understanding which leads to better support for the educational program and to greater interest in the means for improving it. In the report of the Committee of 14 [14] the parts to be played by administration, the board of education, the staff, the pupils, and the community in such cooperative approach to educational planning are described.

The principal will materially increase the extent of lay responsibility for the quality of the school by using one or more of the emerging patterns of public participation described by the Committee of 14. These patterns include: 1. administration-initiated group, 2. the unmet-needs pattern of development, 3. the educational interests of organized groups, 4. individuals as contributors to educational groups, and 5. special-purpose groups. The Committee concludes, from observing these patterns in action, that:

> There is mounting evidence to show that wherever schools have drawn the public into processes of planning, policy formation, discussion of objectives and methods to meet these objectives, such schools have been superior to what otherwise might have been expected.

Inspiration is given to the principal, who feels that his community is lacking in so many of the factors that make for adaptability, by the fact that Mort and Cornell [15] found an occasional school ranking high in adaptability but nevertheless lacking in many of the elements which lead to greater adaptability. This seems to indicate that even if factors which encourage adaptability are more or less meager, someone who is genuinely interested and concerned can make a

[14] Committee of 14, *op. cit.*
[15] Mort and Cornell, *American Schools in Transition, op. cit.*

vast amount of difference. This someone could be the principal.

Community Expectancy

In his study of community factors which are related to adaptability Pierce[16] found that community expectancy of what schools can do, as measured by understanding of what schools should do, is one of the most important measures of the quality of education. The principal can thus feel that anything he does to increase public expectancy of what constitutes a good educational program is well worth the effort involved. A preliminary check with the Mort-Cornell-Hinton opinionnaire will provide a good background for the principal in determining the level of expectancy now held by his community. One of the simplified methods recommended by McCormick could be effectively used also. The principal can then move in the direction of gradually lifting this level at the most strategic points.

A good first step might be to indicate to citizens with a relatively high expectancy that there are those in the community not yet ready to accept certain views on education which these citizens have already professed as fundamental. Perhaps this group can be induced to work on their more backward neighbors, to convince them of the soundness of the views they already hold.

The principal will next develop at every point several viewpoints not yet generally accepted in the school community but which he estimates will be grasped with little difficulty. This can be followed with concepts that may take longer to develop. The aid of staff members with parents and community groups can be invaluable.

[16] Pierce, *op. cit.*

Discussions at P.T.A. meetings and the meetings of other symbiotic groups will prove helpful in raising the level of expectancy. More can be done than at present to educate pupils to a higher level of expectancy, and they in turn can do an important job of selling education to their parents. The implications of several different philosophies of education can be discussed with profit with seventh- and eighth-grade pupils, and this should be done especially for the sake of those with only a year or two remaining before terminating their schooling. These individuals will soon be in position to help determine the course of education as voters and citizens in the city. A few well-planted seeds may yield rich dividends in the form of adults who wish the best kind of schools possible.

Attitude of Parents

One of the most difficult problems for the principal to face in his desire to make his school more adaptable is the static nature of the concepts on school purposes and procedures held by many laymen. Many parents feel that changes for the better in education are fine, but that they should not be made if they interfere with teaching of the basic fundamentals—and as often as not this concept as to what is basic was formed in the previous century. The business of teaching great masses of unrelated facts is still considered the fundamental business of the school by some laymen.

Parents feel, as do most people, that they understand the schools to which they themselves went. As soon as something occurs at school which they do not like, many are prone to criticize the innovations of the school, whether connected with the source of irritation or not.

Often school people believe that their educational program is better understood by the layman than is actually the

case. Flaherty[17] found, for instance, that less than half of the parents he queried understood the necessity for varying standards of achievement. His study reveals that about one third of the parents and pupils are uninformed in respect to a broad curricular program including community problems. The most encouraging part of Flaherty's report was that experimentation in teaching methods is the best understood of all issues.

So long as the ordinary citizen feels that no curbs should be put on trying to find better ways of doing the job of educating the young, an intensified campaign to acquaint all parents with what the school is doing may gradually crumble fixed notions and prejudices concerning the educational program. Too many principals are a bit prone to explain once or twice the purposes behind a change in procedure. Deep-seated attitudes do not yield so easily to logic. Repetition and still more repetition is necessary to help secure a widespread understanding of educational innovations in the community.

Community Needs

In their study of Pennsylvania schools Mort and Cornell[18] observe that in all too few instances is change in policy with reference to the curriculum based on local study of the conditions which require this type of change. In the study of these local conditions it must be recognized that education must move hand in hand with the social, economic, and political forces in the community. Problems concerning housing, city planning, recreation, health, occupational opportunities, and birth trends have a bearing on long-view educational planning. Community needs of all

[17] Flaherty, *op. cit.*
[18] Mort and Cornell, *American Schools in Transition, op. cit.*

kinds must be examined for their implications for changes in educational policy.

The principal must be concerned with the modernization of his physical plant and of the curriculum, with improvement of teaching, with greater recreation facilities, and with expansion of educational opportunities, if he wishes to retain discerning families in the community and to attract young families. Poor housing coupled with inferior educational opportunities will soon result in residents moving to more favorable environments, and the school district will consequently fail to maintain itself as a balanced residential community.

An attempt has been made to classify according to quality the various school districts in a large city. In this survey a composite index of fifteen elements of home and neighborhood environment was developed. Results of the survey indicate that approximately 50 per cent of the population in this city were living in environments classified as poor, very poor, or inferior. The area of the selected school community is rated fair and poor in this survey.

This should give the principal some heart, for his community is just above the median for the city. There is room for improvement but, at the same time, there is something to work with. It is important to make the most of the assets enjoyed while making the community conscious of its shortcomings and joining with the community and the city planning commission to improve conditions. Steps should be taken to clear the poorest areas and improve them with better housing. Public housing projects would help, if it is not possible to secure the construction of private, owner-occupied dwellings.

CHANGES IN THE COMMUNITY

It is desirable to examine the changes that could be made within the community to facilitate the realization of a more adaptable school.

Community Council

The American educational system is predicated on the desirability and efficacy of home rule within a state organization. Boards of Education in units of varying sizes are looked to for supplying the initiative and resourcefulness to keep our educational program on a high plane and to push it to increasingly greater heights. Much has been written and said to indicate the importance of a good general educational program to the well-being of a democratic form of government.

In a large city the task of the board of education is tremendous. Its sheer magnitude prevents the board members from functioning in a manner calculated to give the greatest return in a system of local initiative. In the large city system, local participation in the educational processes has been sacrificed. To maintain the advantages of community participation it is wise to set up for each school an advisory group of laymen who will work with the principal and the members of his staff to perform for the individual school some of the functions usually performed by a local board of education in a small community (see Chapter V).

The school is the agent of the people, and it must be kept close to the people if it is to be of the greatest benefit to society. The advisory council will seek methods of making the community receptive to education. The people in the community are organized to support education, and the school furthers the welfare of the people.

How is such a council organized? A good beginning can be made by having the principal select the natural leaders in the school district. The council should be made up of a broad representation of the people in the district, to remove education from its comparative isolation. Churches, unions, manufacturers' groups, professional groups, and the like if represented on the council will aid in making the school a living part of the lives of its citizens. Selection by the principal can later be replaced by selection by the community itself.

The approach to the problem of challenging the highest interests and efforts of council members is important. It may be desirable in this connection for the principal to choose one or more issues about which the community is already stirred up and to get council action of the right sort on them. In justifying its stand the council will commit itself, along with other members of the community, to action on other problems. If the principal himself is a good leader, he can steer much of this action into worth-while channels, thus supplanting wishful thinking with action.

Too often a principal who wishes action from a lay group does not provide sufficient facts, with the result that the issues involved are confused in the minds of the people, who consequently act blindly if at all. An even more important consideration is that of maintaining the dignity of the people involved by providing the means for them to dig out their own information and then to discover ways and means of acting upon it. We must drop our classroom attitude when dealing with adults and put ourselves in the position of learners along with the other members of the community, if we wish laymen to bring the full use of intelligence to our problems.

Guiding Community Change

In his study of controllable community characteristics related to the quality of education Pierce[19] states:

> The findings of this study—that 64 per cent of the variability in the adaptability of schools may be predicted from variations among communities with reference to the measures of community factors we have employed—focuses attention on the possibility of improving the quality of education by means of improving the community setting in which schools operate. It seems safe to assume that if techniques and devices could be used for raising the level of the community standing in the factors shown to be associated with the goodness of schools, the improvement in the environmental setting would soon be felt in the improvement of its schools.

Knowing at least some of the factors of his community which are closely related to the adaptability of his school, the principal has a springboard from which to launch a series of activities which should result in greater adaptability.

The principal should seek to guide his community by stimulating local initiative through his community council. His greatest task may be to convince the people that they have the power to affect for good or ill the community in which they live. Perhaps this can be done by developing so much interest in evolving a better school that the people are willing to make almost any effort to secure this end. It may be possible to point out in the community's history instances in which specific actions on the part of specific individuals have either harmed or helped the area. In this way it could be brought out that human actions, to a large extent, control community change. If people can change the community, then it behooves them to change it for the better.

The principal should guide the council to use every re-

[19] Pierce, *op. cit.*

source which may stimulate every individual in the community to feel a stake in community betterment. The desirability of planning ahead can be demonstrated. The community must stand behind the master plan if one is being developed for the city. The council is in a position to furnish detailed information on the community which should prove of value to the planning board. Supporting these plans, once evolved, will be one of the best means for realizing local improvements.

Attention to zoning is another means of promoting the best interests of a neighborhood. Avoidance of too many business structures and limitation of factories to well-defined areas are definite aids. The principal must guide his community to preserve its residential areas to protect school enrollment, to keep the educational level on a high plane, and to retain white-collar workers in the district.

Improving the Community

Two significant possibilities for improving the quality of education are pointed out by Pierce.[20] One is to improve the community and the other is to raise the level of understanding in the community concerning what schools can do. The first of these can be influenced more rapidly in the interests of adaptability by the principal.

Every means should be used by the principal to improve in the lay mind the picture of what the school is like and of what it should and could do. Most parents are poorly informed as to what their local school is like and have little conception of the possibilities for improvement. This, then, offers a fertile field for the principal interested in improving the adaptability of his school.

The principal can begin to increase understanding in his

[20] Pierce, *op. cit.*

community by making available to citizens data that underlie such understanding. Discussion and interpretation of the superintendent's report to the citizens of the city (if a report is published) may be a desirable point of departure, for it provides the setting for the local school. Budget pamphlets are issued from time to time and need to be understood by the layman in terms of exactly what his tax money buys in the form of public education. It frequently is helpful to discuss in various types of parent meetings the latest developments in the best schools in the nation and then to compare these developments with what is being done in the local school.

Much can be said for getting parents into the habit of thinking in terms of the really good things to be found in American education. It is an easy next step for them to desire some of these good things for their own children in their own school. Thus knowledge increases the level of expectancy and permits teachers and principal to develop needed adaptations unimpeded by parental ignorance.

Another means of increasing understanding of the educational program of the school is the discussion of school-community problems at all types of meetings of citizens where the introduction of such a topic is possible. P.T.A. meetings provide a fertile ground for these discussions, for it is helpful for parents to get the teachers' slant and for teachers to know what parents are thinking. Gradually there can be developed the feeling of sharing these problems and sharing in the development of solutions. Parents who have recognized a problem and have cooperated in developing an adaptation to meet it will not blindly criticize the school's efforts to meet needs by fostering changes.

Good results in raising the level of community understanding have been reported through the use of a technique

developed by Begg.[21] The principal gathers together several hundred alert laymen and educators, of good insight and possessed of the ability to express themselves, to consider the unmet and emerging needs of the community. After a preliminary address of orientation, the assembled people are divided into discussion groups of twelve to fifteen persons. Individuals in these groups are encouraged to express their ideas as to needs in the community and ways of meeting them. It is particularly desirable to cover a broad range of interests in these meetings, for it is often from the unusual and untried that the best clues to future action evolve.

Each contributor is then encouraged to write out his ideas on a 5 x 8 card. The cards are sorted and resorted in an effort to establish patterns. A written report to synthesize all suggestions is given to each participant. Action may follow on some of the suggestions immediately; in other cases additional meetings for the exploration and development of ideas are needed.

Here is a method designed to provide citizens in the community with a conscious effort to improve known conditions. The interaction of needs and of an agency created to meet certain of these needs can result in movement toward their present-day solution. As change is continuous, it is wise for the principal to repeat this technique from time to time to keep step with ever-emerging unmet needs and to speed up invention to meet these needs.

Keeping the Community Informed

In addition to doing so via the pupils, adaptable schools have many ways of passing on to the public information concerning the school. The more channels a school has, the more adaptable the school, according to Mort and Cor-

[21] Begg, *op. cit.*

nell.[22] This does not mean that the plan by which information is conveniently passed along to parents through the children in school is not used. It does mean, however, that the principal must go beyond this time-honored means if he wishes a truly informed public.

Bulletins to parents written by principal, staff, and/or pupils are valuable. This is particularly true if the material goes deep enough rather than treating only the more superficial aspects of education. It is important that pupils have, through discussions, forums, fact-finding, and experimentation, a clear understanding of any issues they may present in their communications to parents. The school newspaper, if it gets into the home, sometimes serves this function. Features and needs of the school described in the words of the pupils often carry special weight with adults.

The P.T.A. is particularly receptive to educational information, inasmuch as this is one of the purposes motivating its organization and existence. Study groups of the P.T.A., which feature reading of educational literature for purposes of reporting to the group, will make a real difference in the thinking of these individuals concerning educational problems and their solutions.

The purpose of the principal in keeping his community informed is twofold: 1. to develop public understanding of educational problems, and 2. to gain public recognition of lay responsibility. If the principal wishes to advance his program of education, it is important that the community be educated to expect results commensurate with the newer trends in education. Without this, teachers will be forced to produce the results parents feel they understand. A public which assumes a degree of responsibility for its schools will by this fact become a better-informed public.

[22] Mort and Cornell, *American Schools in Transition, op. cit.*

The principal must tap more channels of communication if he wishes people to know about education. Westby[23] found that schools in communities composed of subareas in the city: 1. were more closely related with government agencies, 2. had relatively less contact with parent, youth-centered, service, teacher, and lay advisory groups, 3. were in touch less often with groups favorable to education, 4. were not reaching out as much as they should because many of the organizations named have some advantage in reaching out to the schools, and 5. were unaware of many organizations through which it is possible to reach the public. From this he concludes that the lack of interplay in large cities cannot be ascribed to a lack of channels but to a failure to recognize and utilize them. The principal must not be content to allow his school to drop into this pattern of relative isolation, found so frequently among city schools.

THE SUPER COMMUNITY

Adaptability of a school is affected not only by factors resident in the school or immediate community but also by characteristics of the broad or super community[24] of which the school district is a part, conclude Mort and Cornell[25] from their investigations in Pennsylvania. This suggests that while a great deal of improvement can be realized by the principal through his efforts within his school district, it is wise not to neglect the larger setting in which the city school is located.

The super community should be a rich source of motivation and inspiration to the staff and citizens of a school community. Most cities are metropolitan centers with school,

[23] Westby, *op. cit.*
[24] See Chapter II.
[25] Mort and Cornell, *American Schools in Transition, op. cit.*

cultural, economic, civic, educational, and industrial assets. Nearness to other large cities increases the cultural area and adds to the experiences possible for children and citizens.

The principal is wise to use and provide opportunities for intellectual interchange within the city and with neighboring communities. This interchange should involve the principal, the staff, the pupils, and the parents. Such broadening experiences will lead to many opportunities for contact with adaptations not present in the school and will provide increasing impetus for adoption of certain of these improvements in the local school.

STEPS IN UTILIZING COMMUNITY FORCES FOR GREATER ADAPTABILITY

1. A check should be made of the community's expectancy of what schools can do to serve as a starting point in a campaign to increase the understanding of the public as to what the school should do. As the level of understanding in the community increases, adaptations based on these improved understandings will be made by the principal in the operation of his school. This approach to producing a more adaptable school holds great promise, because the extent to which it can affect the school is in direct proportion to the effort applied by the principal and staff.
2. The principal must realize, as a guide to his work with the community, that lack of participation by the people in school matters prevents the operation of the school in the most adaptable manner.
3. So long as citizens appreciate the need of experimentation to improve education, the principal can take advantage of this fact in making his a more adaptable school. Results of experiments with innovations should be discussed with the community council and with groups of

citizens interested in the unmet needs of the school both before and after experimentation, so that these citizens will feel that they have a stake in the outcome of the innovation.

4. The principal will aim information as to what constitutes good schooling at those of the community who are at least eighth-grade graduates. Even better understanding should be expected of high-school graduates. A high level of appreciation and understanding of good schools should be developed with those who have attended and have graduated from college, for this group should be most active in popularizing the need for a more adaptable school.
5. The principal, with the staff, will organize a community in the school district, using education as the center of interest or focus of thought and effort.
6. The principal will inform teachers, parents, and laymen of the community factors which are known or presumed to be related to the adaptability of the school. He will do his part, with the help of the community council, to alter the community so that it will have more favorable factors and more of those factors classified by Pierce under the categories of good will toward education, understanding of what schools can do, and characteristics which condition the expression of good will and understanding. First a survey will be made by the council to ascertain the present status of the school community regarding these factors, and then a program will be developed to achieve the desired ends. Cooperation will be given to any other groups in the community working for the same ends.
7. The principal and his staff must become aware, by means of a thorough search and careful tabulation, of all of the channels in the community which can be utilized:

a) for education of the public on the meaning of good schools and for developing good will toward education, and b) for bringing back to the school the sort of information on which the principal and his staff depend in developing a more adaptable school. This implies a two-way street operating between the school and its community.

8. A major premise which the principal will popularize in his school community is the importance of local initiative to the welfare of the school and its community. To accomplish this the principal will adopt a program aimed at interesting all of the people in the community in public education. The people will choose for their spokesmen in determining school policy, community needs, and the effectiveness of adaptations in meeting these needs the most intelligent and most interested citizens in the community. The principal will try to develop in these members of the community council the type of concern in public education that will cause them to become interested, later on, in the wider problems of the city's schools as a whole. This would represent the best type of preliminary training possible for future members of the city board of education.

9. Because of the tendency of principals in large city systems to draw away from the community and answer only to the central office, the community council will provide its principal with the opportunity to demonstrate his responsibility to the citizens of the community who have a tangible contribution to make and will furnish them with the means for having their experience and ability in areas other than education reflected in the operation of a more adaptable school.

10. The principal will use the interests already present among a few alert citizens with a high regard for educa-

tion, to influence citizens generally in the school area to understand and desire better schools.

11. The principal may be able to stimulate among white-collar workers a more intense interest in education, so that they can serve as leavening between school and community in the development and enlargement of public understanding of education. These individuals are generally respected in the community, and their opinions carry great weight. They are also those who are more apt to appreciate the importance of the best kind of school it is possible to obtain. The principal must do what he can to produce a keener sense of responsibility in the quality of the school.

12. Those groups in the community which can be utilized as channels of information should be encouraged to get in touch with the school; and, in turn, the principal and teachers must make it their business to reach such groups by affiliation, by giving talks and leading discussions on education, by inviting representative individuals to participate in the community council, forum groups, etc., and by persuading action by these groups that will prove favorable to education.

13. Small groups of representative citizens should be invited to the school from time to time to discuss unmet needs in the district. Citizens who assume the responsibility for analyzing the needs of the community and ways in which the school can contribute to these needs are performing a vital service to the school, and through it to the children in the district. The advice gained from these laymen will serve as a point of departure in making the school more adaptable. No innovation should be made without this preliminary step of examining the local conditions which require a change for the better.

14. Estimates may be secured from time to time from groups such as P.T.A., groups studying unmet needs, and forum groups, on how well the school is accomplishing certain goals and wherein improvements should be made. Such goals might include: a) facility in using skills learned in the school to solve the problems of life, b) the development of more responsible and dependable boys and girls, c) ability to think through situations and arrive at valid conclusions, d) an interest in civic problems, e) inclination to contribute positively to the home, and f) understanding of the values of public education and how best to support it.

15. The principal will provide the means for people in the community to find information they feel is necessary to an understanding of their community and the meaning of good schools. This background of information will serve to elevate community expectancy and will improve the quality of discussions on community needs and the contribution the school can make in meeting these needs.

16. Where possible the principal should seek parental or community-wide participation in developing needed adaptations. This works very well with the diffusion type of adaptation, about which literature is often available in professional books and magazines. Citizens can read about it and discuss it with educators and thus take part in developing plans for carrying out the adaptation in the local school. There is no better way for promoting on the part of laymen a genuine desire to see an adaptation succeed, than to give them a share in planning and, to some extent, in executing the plans—for it is out of this sort of participation that the feeling of responsibility for results is born.

17. The principal will be alert to use as many channels as

possible to inform the public on educational matters and to acquaint the staff with community needs and community reaction to the schools. The community council could be especially helpful in establishing a two-way contact between the school and its community.

18. The principal will help his community to become aware of the recommendations of the city planning commission as a means for improving the school area. He will join with other interested citizens in planning and implementing steps for carrying out the recommendations of the planning commission in this area, in order to improve the environmental setting in which the school operates.

19. The principal must know what ethnic, demographic, economic, educational, and other factors determine community potential for developing good schools. He must help the community to become conscious of these factors and then to devise ways and means for improving them in his particular community.

20. The principal will excite community interest and effort in doing what is possible to raise the cultural level of the community, to increase the amount of home ownership, to hold residents 50 years of age and over, and to attract greater numbers of business and professional workers. All of these factors are tied in with making his school area a more desirable place in which to live. Developing respect for property among the boys and girls of the school can help in this regard. Clean-up campaigns are useful in developing pride in the community. Adequate landscaping in the neighborhood adds the sort of beauty that attracts and holds residents. A good school is probably one of the strongest attractions to discerning people. Active interest in zoning is an important means for keeping the community up to desirable standards of residential use.

21. The principal will not confine his efforts to the usual school hours. He will observe flexible hours so that he may contribute his services in the school or in the community —wherever and whenever such efforts will do the most good in producing a better school. It is probable that far more of the principal's time can be used effectively outside of his building and outside of the usual school hours, than has been the practice in the past.

22. It may be desirable for the principal to instigate a joining of forces with the school communities represented by the local high school and its contributing elementary schools, in order to appreciate the advantages of size and clustering. This is particularly true if progress in working only with the local school community is slow, or whenever it appears likely that advantages would accrue from such coordination of interest and effort.

23. The principal will be alert to utilize the advantages of the super community of which the school community is a part.

24. The principal must reach the understanding in his thinking that failure to analyze community needs and to take steps to meet these needs in the community and in the school not only results in an inadequate community here and now but serves as a harbinger to an even more undesirable community in the future; for it is inevitable that discerning parents tend to leave a community of this kind and young parents steer clear of it as a place to bring up their children.

IX Symbiotic Groups

Within the community there are many organized groups which have a bearing on the adaptability of the school in that community. Often these groups are the source of an untapped potential or little-used means for improving the quality of the school. This aspect of community life must be examined for its implications to the program of adaptability being developed by the school principal.

RELATIONSHIP TO ADAPTABILITY

To understand more fully the influence which could be brought to bear, by use of symbiotic groups, on the promotion of adaptability in the school, it may be well to examine the relationships to adaptability already established by research with such groups.

Relationship Stronger than Other Factors

In his study of the effect of symbiotic groups on adaptability, Gallagher[1] concludes that, "The relationships of sym-

[1] Gallagher, *op. cit.*

biotic groups to adaptability are stronger than the relationships of most other factors to adaptability." These other factors which bear a relationship to adaptability are: social factors, occupation level, trends in prosperity, wealth, and tax burden. If symbiotic groups are so important to adaptability, it is vital that the principal take into consideration this force which holds such high promise for the promotion of adaptability.

Correlation with Time Scale

Gallagher[2] grouped his data on symbiotic groups into five categories: a) showing interest, b) showing consequential interest, c) being staff-connected, d) with members mostly in the school district, e) being helpful. All five types of symbiotic groups showed significant correlation with the time scale. The strongest relationship with adaptability at the elementary level is that of staff-connected symbiotic groups. Here is the strongest argument to convince the principal that it would be advisable for him and his staff to become members of symbiotic groups in the neighborhood.

As pointed out previously, the schools of a large city are not reaching out to establish school community relations. Gallagher's results show, too, that the larger elementary schools (700 to 1000 pupils) tend to have poorer and fewer relationships with the community than do the smaller elementary schools. Too often, where relationships between school and community did exist the groups and organizations in the community had taken the initiative. The city schools identified themselves with more organizations having a less favorable or even a negative attitude toward schools. City schools are less likely to encourage relations with the type of organization that serves as a channel of school-

[2] *Ibid.*

community interplay than do schools in smaller population areas. There are many organizations to be found in cities which could serve as channels for interplay between schools and their communities, but the city schools are not utilizing them.

Here again is one of the disadvantages frequently encountered in the large city elementary school that the principal can help to offset by making his school more of a community school. To do this it will be necessary to break down the apathy of those who dwell in the school district by making the school a focal point of community life. This is not always as easy in the city as in the small community, where there are but one or two elementary schools and the boundaries of a community automatically form the area of interest in school affairs. But with some effort the city principal can make his school a center for Boy and Girl Scout activities, forum groups, a good, active P.T.A., lecture series, adult-education and recreation, and other types of groups calculated to draw citizens in the general school area into the school.

Spread of Groups

At first glance it may seem a difficult task to consider the many kinds of groups it is possible to foster in a school building. Gallagher,[3] however, found that all but 41 of the 2543 symbiotic groups which showed consequential interest could be classified into 20 easily discernible headings. These are: art and music groups, business groups, church and religious bodies, citizens' groups, college graduates' associations, forum groups, libraries, local governments, lodges, non-public schools, P.T.A.'s, etc., patriotic groups, pupil groups, recreation groups, service clubs, social agencies, taxpayer groups,

[3] *Ibid.*

teachers' associations, women's clubs, and youth groups. With a classification such as this to serve as a guide, it is more easily possible for the principal to encourage a variety of organizations to use his school building as headquarters, and to guide the staff of the school toward representation in a wider variety of associations. A good group for the school to foster is a branch of the Society for the Advancement of Public Education in America.

The above classification of symbiotic groups makes the number of kinds small enough to be easily understood and worked with. The number of different kinds of symbiotic groups to be found in a particular school district could be classified under these headings to simplify communication. Ten of these 20 groups account for nearly 90 per cent of all of the symbiotic groups reported to Gallagher. These top ten groups listed alphabetically are:

Business groups
Church or religious bodies
Citizens' groups
P.T.A.'s, etc.
Patriotic groups
Recreation groups
Service clubs
Social agencies
Women's clubs
Youth groups

Significance at the Elementary Level

In analyzing the effect upon adaptability of the various types of symbiotic groups by means of *The Growing Edge* and the *Time Scale,* Gallagher[4] found that symbiotic groups vary in their relationships with adaptability, thus making it desirable that the principal deal with each group in terms of its potential for adaptability. Most of the symbiotic groups reported showed consequential interest in educational matters and about three fourths of them were reported as helpful. Gallagher concludes that symbiotic groups arrange

[4] *Ibid.*

themselves as follows regarding their impact on elementary education:

1. Highly significant relationship to elementary-school adaptability:
   P.T.A.'s, except when confined to own attendance area
   Women's clubs only when staff-connected at the elementary level
   College graduates' association reported as interested
   Patriotic groups that are staff-connected
   Recreation groups when staff-connected
   Youth groups that are interested
2. Statistically significant relationship to elementary-school adaptability:
   Church and other religious bodies
   Citizens' groups
   Forum groups when interested
   Pupil groups, even when staff-connected
   Service clubs when staff-connected
   Taxpayer groups that are staff-connected
3. Marked but not significant:
   Art and Music groups reported as interested
   Social agencies
4. Inconclusive:
   Art and Music groups when staff-connected and when they had membership mostly within the attendance areas of the elementary schools
   Business groups
   Libraries
   Local governments
5. Negative:
   Lodges
   Non-public schools

According to this analysis it is wise for the principal to work closely with his P.T.A. Every effort should be made to extend membership of the P.T.A. beyond the attendance area of the school, since this will materially enhance the strength of the relationship between this symbiotic group and adaptability. Along with this there could be greater collaboration between the local branch of the P.T.A. and the county and national groups, in order to broaden the interests and understandings of the local group. For added impetus to adaptability all staff members should be encouraged to join in P.T.A. activities, and several could be members of the executive board on a rotating basis.

Teachers should be encouraged to join women's clubs, for such clubs have a highly significant correlation with elementary-school adaptability that is exceeded only by that of P.T.A.'s. Without such staff connections women's clubs drop to being least effective for adaptability.

Considering the high level of relationship which college graduates' groups bear to adaptability, it may be wise for the principal to attempt the organization of such a group when none exists in his community. Even though the group may not be large in a particular school community, it could prove powerful in fostering better education. Combining forces with college graduates whose children attend neighboring schools would produce greater numbers and, possibly, a more active organization. It is unnecessary to encourage teacher participation with such group, for this type of connection has little bearing on adaptability.

Youth groups should be encouraged to meet in the school. Staff contact has yielded far too little in the past; therefore it is important that staff members who work with these groups develop a program to inform youths of the present status of education and something of the current trends in

education. It is wise to encourage membership from a wide area in such groups.

Reference to the above list for other groups with statistically significant relationships to elementary adaptability will furnish further clues to the principal for getting the most out of the organized groups which he can interest. If time is a factor limiting the number of groups that the school personnel can reach, little need be done with those groups which fall in the inconclusive and negative categories in the above-listed distribution. Most effort should naturally be given to those which prove to have a highly significant and statistically significant relationship with adaptability.

WORKING WITH SYMBIOTIC GROUPS

It is important to be aware of symbiotic groups and to work with them in a manner that will cause them to contribute to the adaptability of the school. Mort[5] advises the principal to assess the value which symbiotic groups represent in the community, discover the interests these groups have which might be utilized to develop better understanding of the power of education, and open channels of communication between such groups and the school.

Many schools have been characteristically lax in seeking out and utilizing the symbiotic groups in the district. The extent of staff-connectedness with non-educational organizations is only slightly better for the selected school than for the ten least adaptable schools studied by Buley. This applies only to the number of teachers who belong to but one organization, which is the extent of affiliation that gives the most positive relationship to adaptability. The 45 per cent of teachers in the selected school who are unaffiliated should be urged to seek out symbiotic groups in which the staff of

[5] Mort, *op. cit.*

this school does not yet have membership, and make contact with them. The 37.5 per cent of the staff who have membership in two to five organizations might be encouraged to reduce this number to one or two, or to give special attention to school-group interplay with but one of the groups concerned. This is indicated by the fact that relationships of groups for adaptability tend to become weaker as teachers add to their affiliations.

A great deal of experimentation and invention is needed to learn the best ways of using school-symbiotic group contacts to the best advantage of the school. As yet we have barely scratched the surface of this important means of furthering adaptability in most schools. One means of breaking into the consciousness of groups whose sphere of activity coincides with the school district is to invite representatives of each of them to join the community council. This provides some possibility of opening the way for school-organizational interaction.

EFFECT OF TYPE OF COMMUNITY ON SYMBIOTIC GROUPS

City schools have tended to develop a certain amount of anonymity in regard to the public, instead of striking out as do schools in smaller areas which work more directly and more closely with their communities. It is easy for a principal to feel that his particular school community is so different from those where the schools work closely with symbiotic groups that it is not worth his effort to make connections with the groups in his own community.

Gallagher[6] has established that the kind of community or the type of school situation is not controlling in the number of symbiotic contacts that schools have. This should remove any question in the mind of a principal concerning the suit-

[6] Gallagher, *op. cit.*

ability of his school area for doing a job with its symbiotic groups. There are not so many factors, after all, within the make-up of the community that make one community better or poorer than another for getting the most out of symbiotic group relations.

CONDITIONS FAVORING SYMBIOTIC GROUPS

Gallagher[7] found that some factors seemed to be uniquely associated with symbiotic groups reported by elementary schools.

> Symbiotic groups tended to be reported more often by elementary schools in communities where one or more of these conditions were found: 1. where there were more college graduates, 2. where there were more foreign-born parents, 3. where there were more people over 50 years of age, 4. where financial factors were favorable (places where wealth was stable, taxes were lower, and there was some tax leeway), 5. where communities had stable populations.

It will be noted that some of these points are those included in Pierce's study under factors which condition the expression of good will and understanding. Examination of data concerning his school district may reveal to the principal that his school community is relatively weak on the points mentioned by Gallagher. This should challenge the principal to get the most from symbiotic groups in his district, despite the presence of certain adverse factors or the absence of positive factors.

It should be significant to the principal of a city school that communities with large elementary schools tend to have fewer and poorer relationships with symbiotic groups than do communities with elementary schools of fewer than 400 pupils. This is probably due in part to the apathy of citizens

[7] *Ibid.*

in the larger cities, where the large elementary schools are usually found, and to the evidently greater effort made by principals of smaller elementary schools in the smaller communities to work with community groups in the development of better education. Both of these conditions are of a nature about which the principal of the large city elementary school can do much. Progress is largely dependent upon what the principal and his staff are willing to do about the situation as they find it.

There is basis for the principal, if he is so inclined, to excuse himself from having better results. But if he is interested in a more adaptable school he will begin a program to offset the disadvantages in his community and use to fullest advantage the conditions which favor symbiotic group action. These latter include: higher percentage of married teachers, more men teachers, low pupil-teacher ratio, more mature teaching staff, and many contacts by pupils with out-of-school clubs.

ADAPTABILITY AND SYMBIOTIC GROUPS BASED ON INTEREST

On the basis of interest, P.T.A.'s, teachers' associations, youth groups, forum groups, and citizens' groups are most significantly related to elementary-school adaptability, according to Gallagher.[8] If the principal wishes to get out into his community and develop interest in a better educational program, this knowledge will serve as a guide. His first effort should be to get into touch with these top groups, keep them informed of developments in the school, disclose to them areas in which the school is working to make itself more adaptable, and invite their assistance in educating the entire community concerning next steps in growth.

[8] *Ibid.*

Surprisingly enough, libraries and social agencies had negative relationships with elementary adaptability on the basis of interest alone. To raise this level of interest on the part of these two important types of public institutions the principal should embark on a program to demonstrate to them the greater values of adaptable schools. The librarian of the local branch library could be invited to staff meetings in order to make him aware of the goals of education and what the teachers are doing to achieve these goals. Then when pupils of the school call at the library to seek aid in completing their assignments, the librarian will be in a position to lend more intelligent assistance to them. The librarian might be brought into the school for a story-telling hour, or groups of children could be sent to the library for that purpose. The librarian should be called upon to supply professional books for the staff.

In a community where many children come into contact with one social agency or another, it is imperative that these agencies understand something of the power of education as well as that the school staff learn something of the purposes and program of the agencies. There is as yet too much working at cross-purposes between social agencies and the school, to the disadvantage of the children involved. A conference was held recently in a large city to consider problems of mutual concern to educators and the personnel of social agencies. Principals, central office personnel, teachers, members of P.T.A.'s, and members of the lay public were invited, together with representatives in all types of positions in all of the various social agencies. This conference helped to develop greater understanding of the work of each of these types of institutions and may raise the level of interest of social agencies in the schools.

The fact that some 90 per cent of all reported groups

showed consequential interest indicates something powerful for education. It is up to the principal to develop and further this interest for all groups that impinge on his school district.

STEPS IN REALIZING MOST FROM SYMBIOTIC GROUPS RELATED TO THE SCHOOL

1. The principal should survey his community, to ascertain the types of symbiotic groups available in his school district.
2. Good and poor ways of establishing contacts with symbiotic groups, understanding of group psychology, the relationship of symbiotic groups to adaptability, what symbiotic groups can contribute to the adaptability of schools, and how to develop group consciousness for better education will become the subjects of staff discussions. Along with this, teachers can be advised concerning extension courses which will aid them to better understand how to work with symbiotic groups.
3. The principal will want to know what contacts his staff already have with symbiotic groups. As good staff relations with such groups hold the strongest promise for adaptability, the principal will encourage each teacher to become a member of one symbiotic group, according to individual preference, and in this way tie into as large a variety of groups as the size of staff permits.
4. Special encouragement should be given by the principal to the more mature, the men, and the married teachers of the staff, for such teachers tend to have the most promising contacts when connected with symbiotic groups.
5. The principal and staff will want, especially, to have a member in each of the groups found to affect most positively the adaptability of the educational program. For

this reason particular pains will be taken to establish desirable connections with the P.T.A., women's clubs, teacher associations, patriotic groups, and service clubs when attempting an adaptation of the growing edge or pioneering type, and with church groups, local government, recreation groups, service clubs, and forums when interested in the time scale or catching-up type of adaptation. The principal and staff will keep these groups informed of developments in the school, disclose areas in which the school is attempting to make itself more adaptable, and invite the active assistance of the organizations in spreading knowledge of the importance of these endeavors throughout the community.

6. The principal will work closely with the P.T.A. of the school and will encourage going outside of the immediate school district for membership and contact. Close association with the county and national groups tends to make the local branch of the P.T.A. more helpful in building a more adaptable school.

7. The principal will organize the members of the community with college experience, for such a group tends to favor a good quality of education. Leading citizens in a community are often found in this group, and they can work together as a symbiotic group which has for its primary objective the making of a more adaptable school.

8. The principal and staff will do everything possible to interest the various symbiotic groups with which contact has been established in the values and power of education. This will be done by speaking to the groups, by securing outstanding educators from time to time on the programs of the various organizations, by exciting the kind of interest in educational progress that will cause the members of the clubs to carry these ideas to their friends and neigh-

bors, and by securing action when action is needed on educational matters.

9. The principal will avoid any attempt to reduce the school's contacts with community groups to a precise formula. Experience indicates that no blanket policy of work with these groups can be adequate. Good procedures for contacts with each type of group must be developed in the process of making contacts. Constant evaluation is needed to insure best results from each of these contacts.

10. The principal will identify his school with symbiotic groups of known impetus to adaptability, for these serve as the best channels of school-community interplay. He will avoid limiting school connections to those groups which have a stake in reaching the school, for such groups are often less favorable and even negative in their attitude toward schools. When this program is well under way, efforts can be turned to interesting apathetic and even hostile groups in the cause of better public education for all children in the school district.

11. Evaluation should be made by the staff of the strong and weak characteristics of each type of group in its relationship to adaptability. Such a study will indicate to the principal which contacts may be continued with profit and which need readjustment to become of benefit.

12. Each of the more helpful symbiotic groups in the community should be invited to have a representative on the community council of the school. This would raise the level of interest in education among the members of these groups and would serve as a means of keeping the school informed of the recognition of, attitude toward, and action taken on community needs by the members in these various organizations.

X Summary

It should now be eminently clear that the studies already made in adaptability present a forceful challenge to the principal of an elementary school, particularly in a large city school system. There are many adjustments that can be made in the operation of a school to promote a more useful educational program.

This chapter is intended not to supplant but to supplement the steps listed at the ends of each of the several previous chapters. Its primary purpose is to place the points covered in previous chapters in proper relationship one to another, in order to provide a unified program for the principal of a school in making his school more adaptable.

Adaptability requires creative thinking and planning. It seeks to devise better—or the best—ways of accomplishing desired ends or purposes. In education, particularly, we need many people who will constantly endeavor to find better ways of doing their work or of achieving their larger purposes in life. These are the educators who do things better than others, who discover new and better ways of accom-

plishing their ends. All change, all advances in practice, and, ultimately, all progress of our educational program, are due to their thinking. To this challenge the principal of every school must inevitably respond.

This study has indicated the tremendous importance of securing more local initiative in large cities to offset the development of many of the characteristics of centralized state systems of education. Leadership in elementary education will not return to the large city schools until such schools adopt more of the present characteristics to be found in communities of about 100,000 population. Within the city, each local school or small group of schools (such as a high school with its contributing elementary schools) must examine the needs of the boys and girls in the community and then adapt the schools to bring about an ever better fulfillment of these needs. This investigation has been based on the premise that the principal of a school is in a most strategic position to make his school operationally more adaptable through the development of local initiative in his school district.

The principal must serve as the community superintendent by developing his activities on the basis that he is responsible for the quality and quantity of local initiative displayed in his school district. When this factor is coupled with the understanding that adaptability is greatly dependent upon the exercise of local initiative, it is possible for the principal to arrive at but one conclusion: if a school is to have the best possible educational program it is largely the responsibility of the principal.

As a prerequisite, the principal must have a clear understanding of the aims and purposes of elementary education and of what procedures may be used to implement these objectives. He will recognize from this understanding that many important changes are needed in education and that

only the elementary school whose principal is interested in making his school adaptable will be in a position to adjust to these changes in stride.

The principal, in the future, must serve as the educational leader of his school community. His role will become that of guide, consultant, coordinator, staff education leader, and informer on educational practices to the public. His chief functions will be to assist in the identification of problems, to initiate the interest and awareness of teachers, pupils, parents, and other laymen in the problems of education, and to coordinate the various phases of the educational program in his school, so that real progress can be made by the school in the solutions to these problems.

The principal will know that changes for the better can be made only when he, the staff, the parents, and community organizations understand the changes needed in education, believe them vital, and are willing to expend effort to achieve them. He will guide the efforts of all concerned to the most efficient realization of educational practices of proven value and in the experimentation with solutions to problems for which we do not as yet have satisfactory practices.

He will appreciate that, though a large school system enjoys many advantages because it is a unified enterprise, there is still room for variation. Fortunately, public education in many cities is not now in the hands of those who cannot think beyond the pattern of a rigid uniform mold. What is needed is informed differences of opinion—within the school system and within the individual school, so long as all personnel pull together toward the goal of better schools. The principal will use the experts gathered in the central office to further the educational program initiated in the local school district.

The principal will arrange through his own efforts and through the community council to cause the Board of Education to become increasingly informed of the program being developed in the district and of the necessity of providing a maximum of flexibility in the operation of local schools, if adaptability is to be encouraged.

Where the expressed policy of the superintendent of schools encourages the individual principals to serve as community superintendents, this possibility should be adopted and exploited to its greatest potential for producing a more adaptable school. The acceptance of this attitude by the principal should remove the last barrier to moving boldly forward by applying known conditioners to adaptability in the operation of the individual school.

The principal will take an active part in teacher education. He will encourage on the part of all teachers on the staff the critical evaluation of the educational program as it now exists in the school. Within the school he will make it possible for the more creative teachers to exercise their initiative, for it is these teachers who hold the promise of better education to come. It is the task of the principal to stimulate the teachers, to provide necessary conditions and resources for good teaching, and to eliminate obstacles, restrictions, and interferences so that teachers may give their full attention to the guidance of children by the use of worthwhile, life-centered activities.

The principal must view the community about his school as a source of great potential awaiting only the skillful hand of an informed principal to awaken this force to its full realization. It is the task of the principal to stimulate community trends that lead to a better school while, at the same time, offsetting or eradicating those trends that retard and inhibit the development of a lighthouse or pioneer school.

One of the most important conditioners to adaptability is the raising of community expectancy as to what schools can do. Every avenue of intercourse between the school and its community must be exploited by the principal to improve lay understanding of the significance of good schools. The citizens of the community must be stimulated to take an active interest in obtaining for their children the kind of elementary education which the best and wisest parent wishes for his child.

One means of realizing the type of motivation and stimulation to good education found in smaller communities is to develop a community council for the city school. This can get under way through appointment by the principal of the leaders in the community. When this council has succeeded in developing a high level of interest in education on the part of the citizens in the school area, the perpetuation of this council and its work may be turned over to the people of the school community.

The principal will employ the symbiotic groups found in the community as a two-way channel for getting to the people information about the school and getting to the staff information about the community. Effort should be made to have every member of the staff connected with at least one symbiotic group because of the effect of such affiliation on adaptability. Teachers will be encouraged to take every opportunity, through extension courses, staff discussions, and in other ways, to become better informed on how to work with symbiotic groups in order to get greatest value from these relationships. Special effort will be made to develop close ties with the organizations most conducive to adaptability of the school. Citizens with college backgrounds will be encouraged to take a particular interest in the quality of education offered by the school.

The principal must prepare himself for this high quality of service to his school and community by returning to a good teachers college once in five years in order to keep in touch with the latest trends in education. He will be a student of the factors which influence the adaptability of schools, will use in his school with a minimum of delay those practices which have demonstrated their value, and will experiment with further adaptations not yet tried in other schools. The diligent pursuit of such a program by the principal will do much to offset the usual retardation to adaptability found in large cities.

A close association with local teachers colleges will have mutual advantages. The local community will benefit from the help of experts and from the assistance that can be afforded by work of graduate students in the community. The college will benefit from contact with a live situation; its students will learn from practical experience. This type of background for teachers in training will make available to the local school new teachers who have had the best kind of education to prepare them to function positively in an adaptable school.

If principals in general used teacher organizations and the journals of these organizations for the discussion of factors productive of adaptability and of adaptations developed in specific situations, such associations could serve as a positive force in producing more adaptable schools. The experience of writing about an adaptation for publication in a magazine is a stimulus to further activity along this line and will assist in aiding diffusion.

The principal can aid adaptability in the state by participating in the process of adaptation. He can do this by being alert to developing needs, analyzing them, devising ways of meeting these needs, experimenting with invention in his

own school, evaluating and improving the adaptation, and assisting in its diffusion to other schools. Also, innovations made in other schools can be tried out and improved in his own school.

It is not sufficient to make a few isolated adaptations in a particular school. Such action will make some improvement in the adaptability of that school, but it will mean only temporary progress. More important than this is the attempt to improve the adaptability of the school—the tendency to adopt or invent practices as rapidly as newly emerging needs are recognized. This latter will do more for the long-range improvement of the school than the adoption of a few isolated and little-understood practices.

The findings reported in this volume should remove the last vestige of doubt in the mind of the principal of any school that improvement of his school is not only necessary but urgent. It has been demonstrated that the teachers, by training and preparation, are usually ready for a better quality of teaching than the present level of performance. It has been shown that parents and other citizens are ready, or can be made ready through the efforts of the principal, for a more adaptable educational program. The central office staff, rather than being a block to progress, is often disposed to aid the principal who has vision and who displays initiative. It remains, then, for the principal of the individual school to start the process which will vitalize the dynamic forces, already latent in the community, into positive action and make of his school a lighthouse school.

Making his school more adaptable is not merely an academic consideration by the principal, for, unless large numbers of elementary-school principals throughout the nation are now likewise engaged in building better schools in this atomic age, it will mean not merely more generations of in-

adequate adults but may mean the end of existence itself. The coming generations must be prepared to solve the problems of the world far better than has been true in the past; for the continued inept treatment of issues may lead to a cataclysmic end to civilization. There is but one antidote—improved education in each of the individual schools, such as has been indicated here, to produce men and women who have the interest and the power to solve the problems of the world in a manner that will elevate our civilization to a new level.

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